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Ngo

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(54) **ELECTRICAL CONNECTOR ASSEMBLY**

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(*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this patent is extended or adjusted under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) by 104 days.

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(51) **Int. Cl.**

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H01R 24/00	(2011.01)
H01R 43/18	(2006.01)
H01R 12/72	(2011.01)
H01R 13/514	(2006.01)
H01R 24/20	(2011.01)
H01R 13/627	(2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**

CPC ***H01R 24/00*** (2013.01); ***H01R 12/721*** (2013.01); ***H01R 13/514*** (2013.01); ***H01R 24/20*** (2013.01); ***H01R 43/18*** (2013.01); *H01R 13/6273* (2013.01); *Y10T 29/49208* (2015.01); *Y10T 29/49222* (2015.01)

(58) **Field of Classification Search**

CPC H01R 31/06; H01R 31/065; H01R 23/025; H01R 27/02; H01R 2103/00

USPC 439/638, 660, 634, 701, 717

See application file for complete search history.

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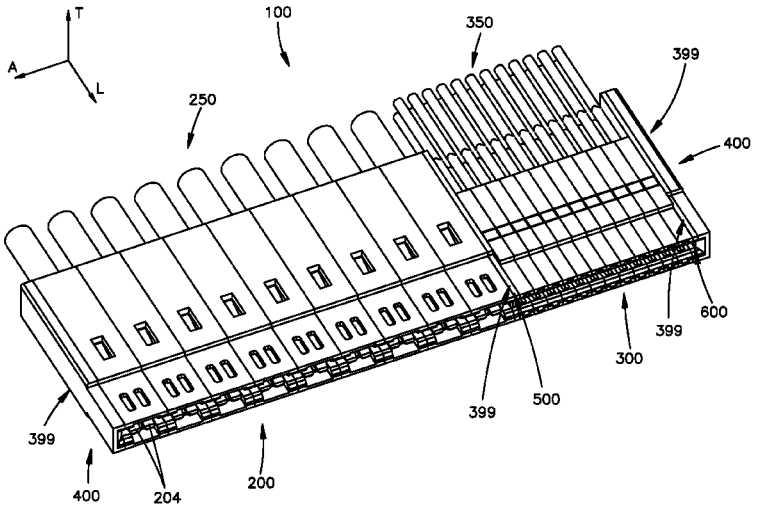
(57) **ABSTRACT**

An electrical assembly can include one or more electrical connectors. Each electrical connector can include at least a first connector housing supporting a plurality of electrical power contacts and a second connector housing supporting a plurality of electrical signal contacts. Each of the first and second connector housings can define respective receptacles that are open on respective opposed sides of the first and second connector housings. Each electrical connector can further include at least one, such as a plurality of closure members configured to close the receptacles at respective lateral sides of the first and second connector housings. The closure members of the first and second electrical connectors can comprise at least one or all of end members, interconnect members, and spacer members.

31 Claims, 19 Drawing Sheets



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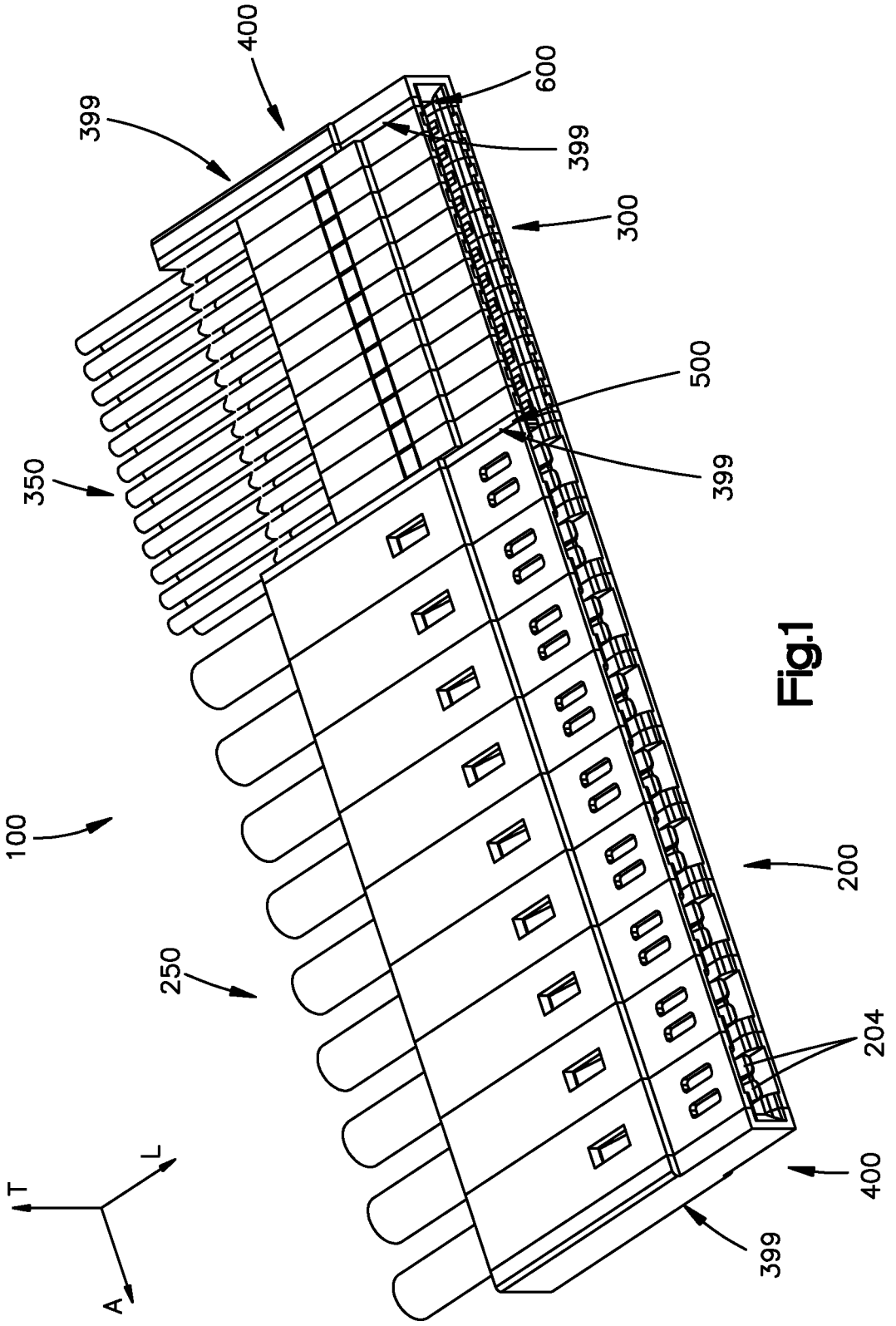

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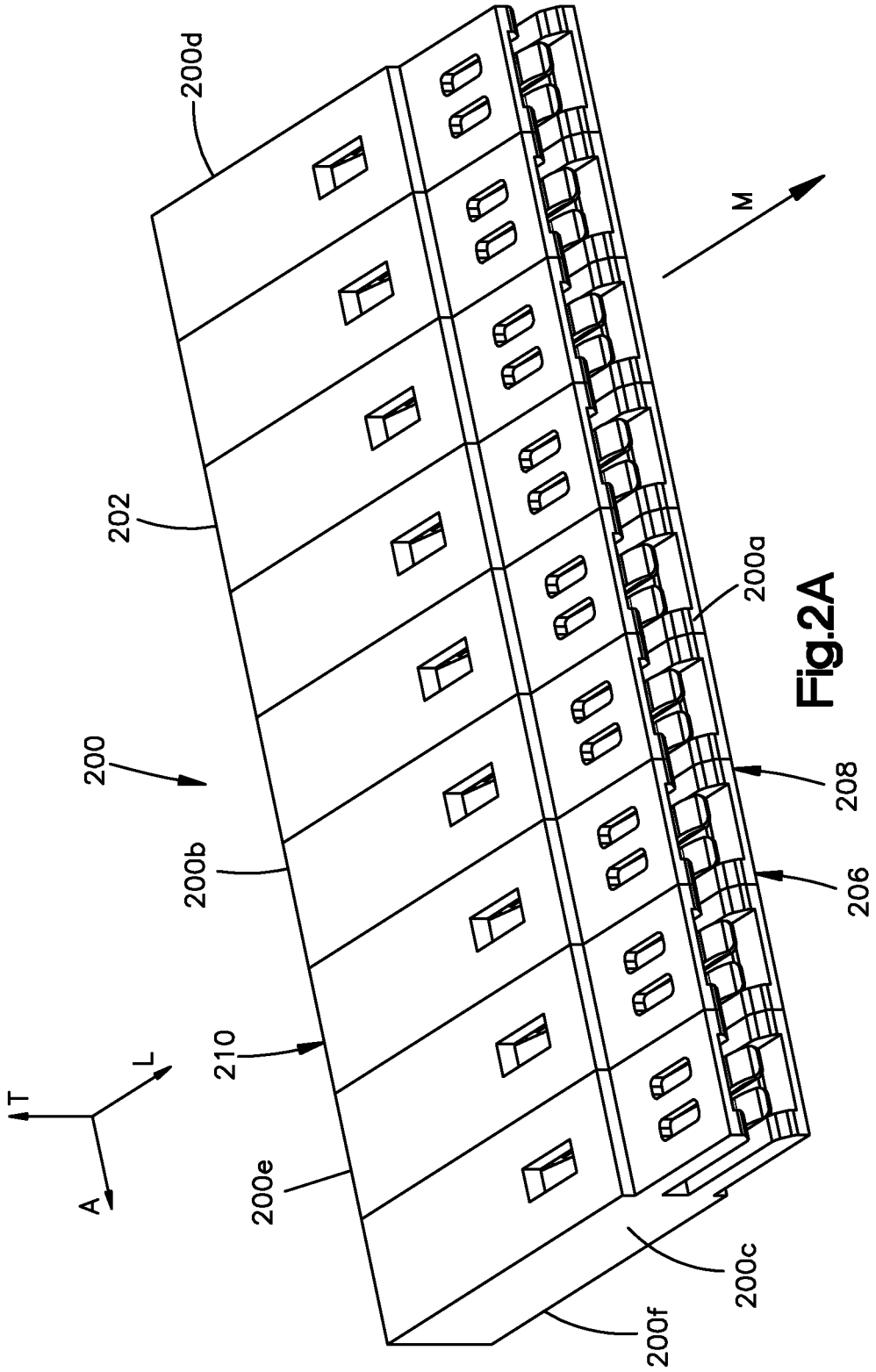

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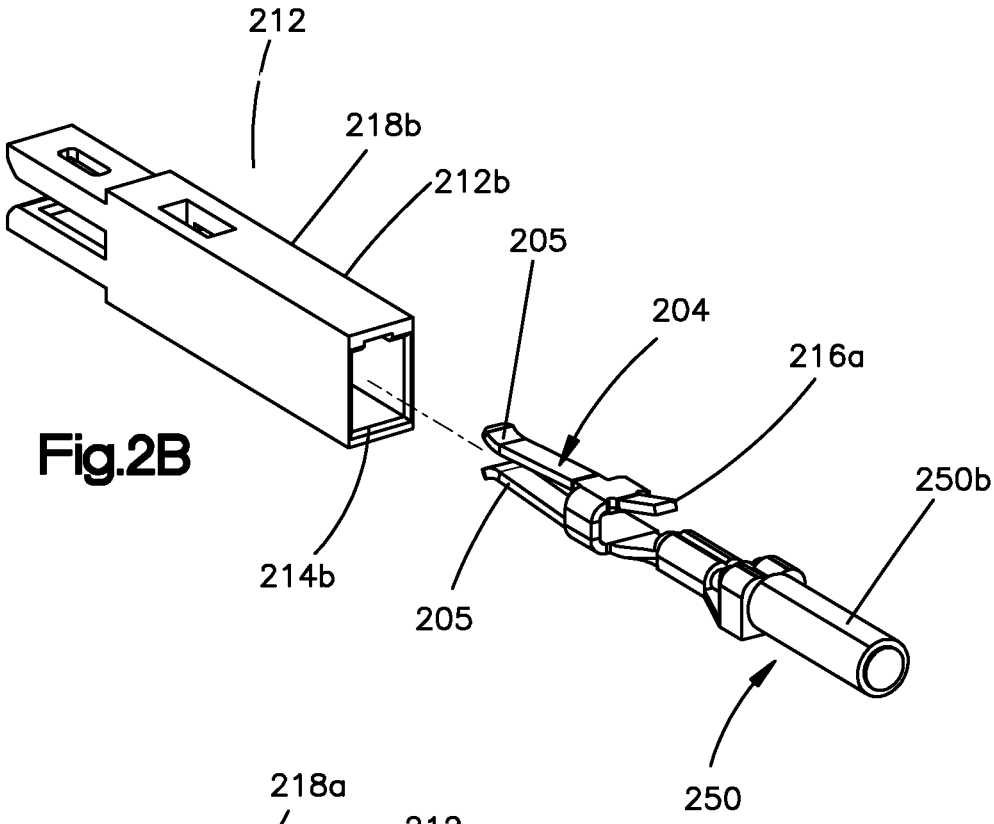
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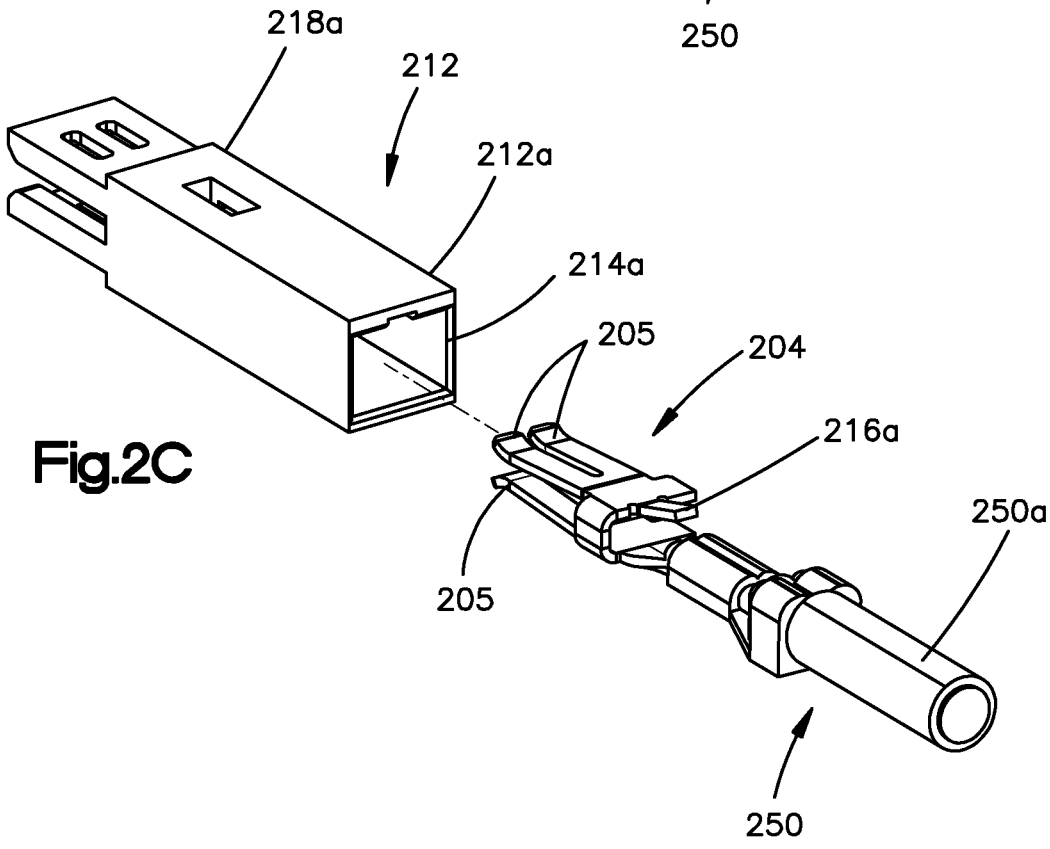
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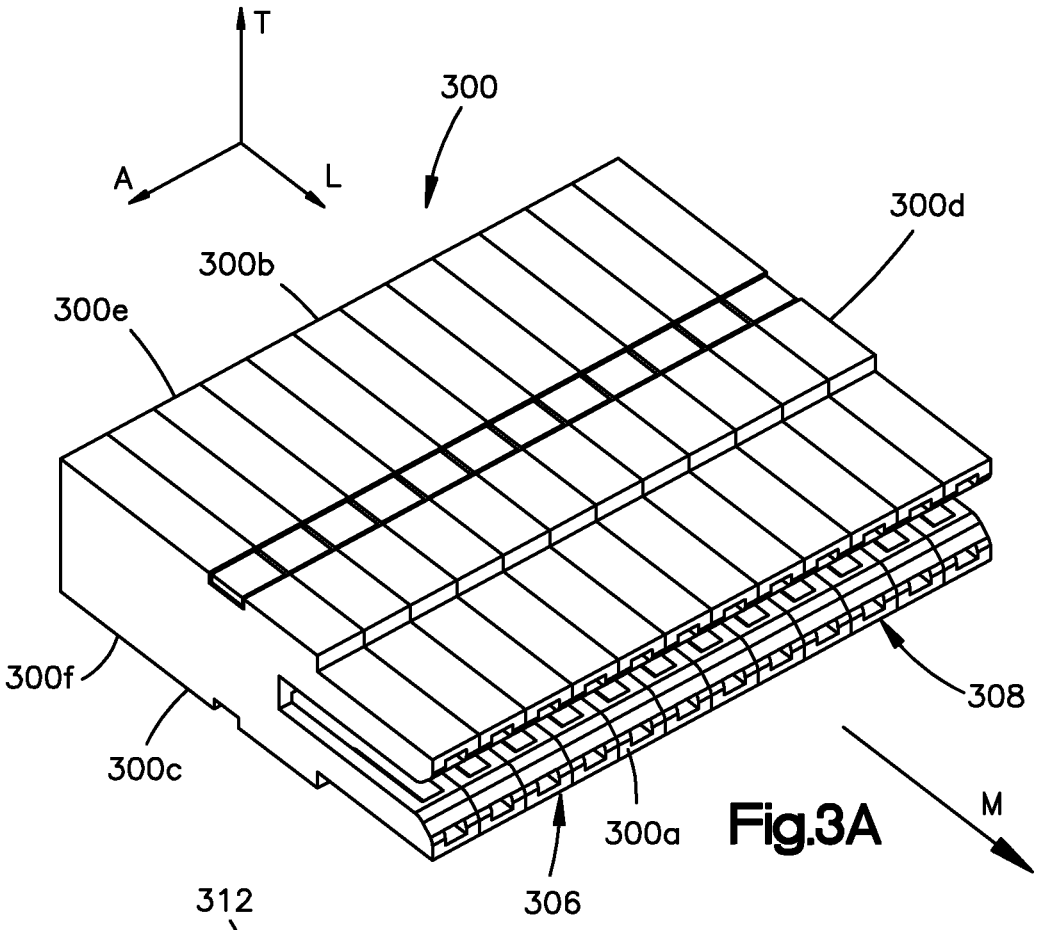
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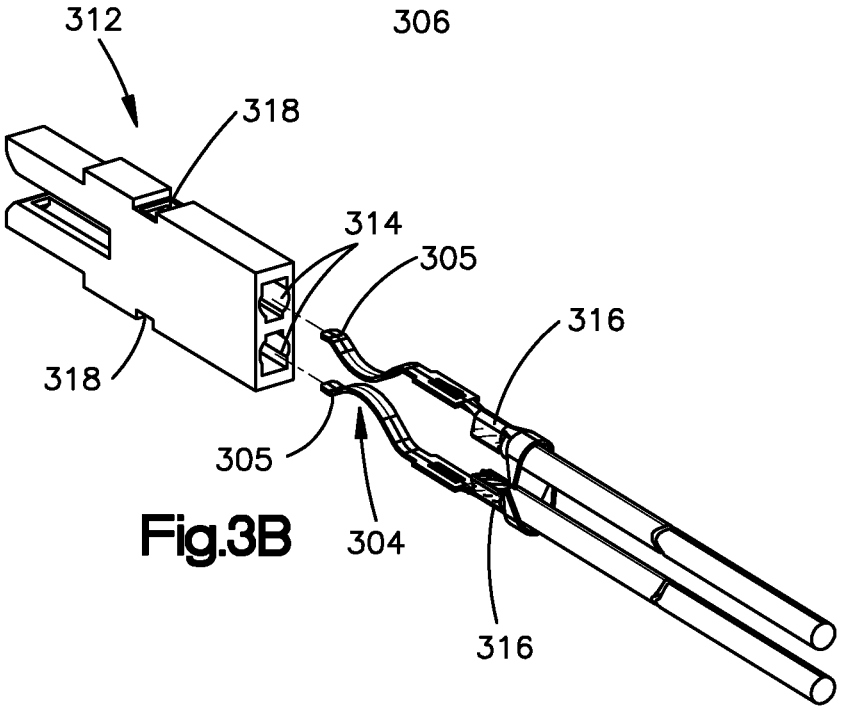
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Fig.3B

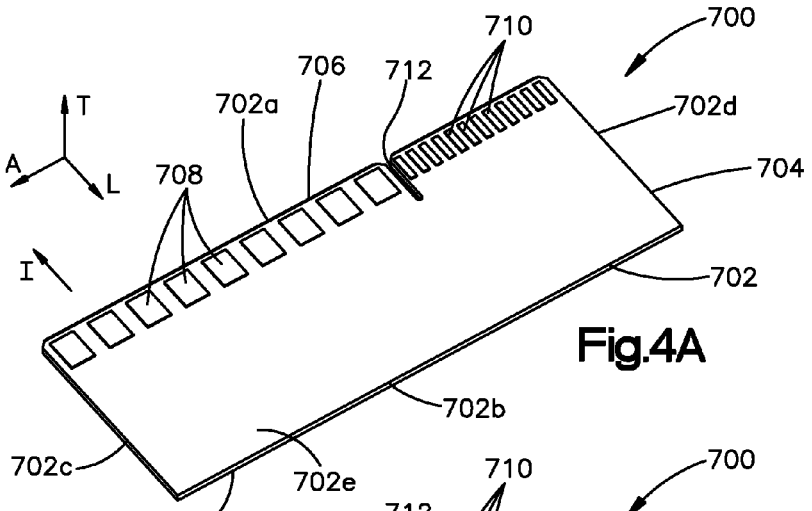


Fig.4A

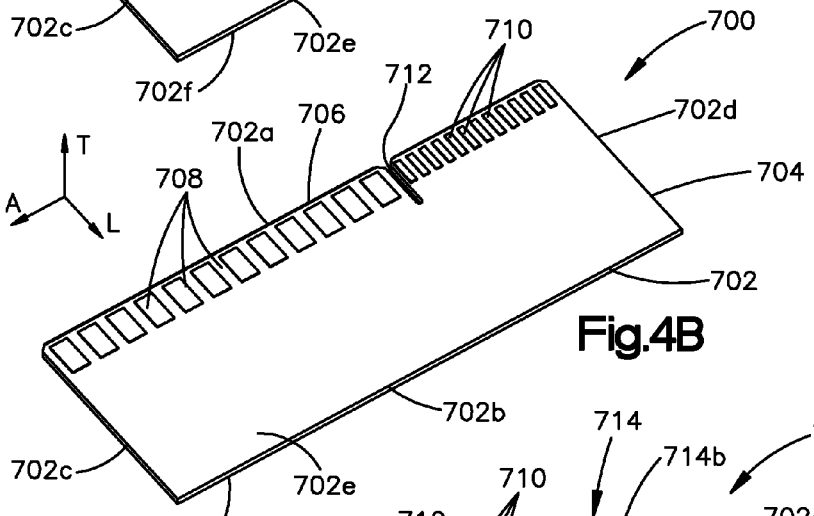
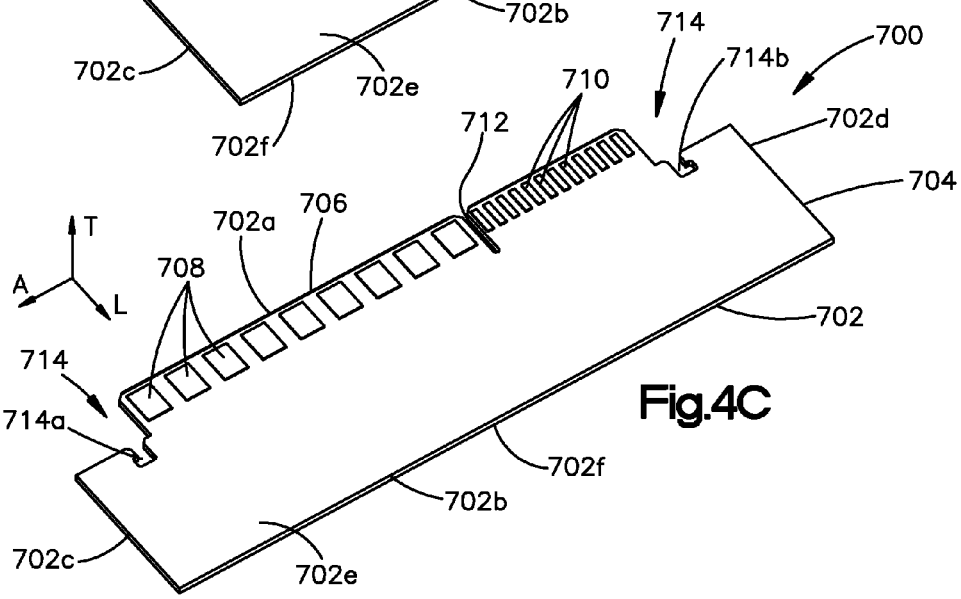


Fig.4B



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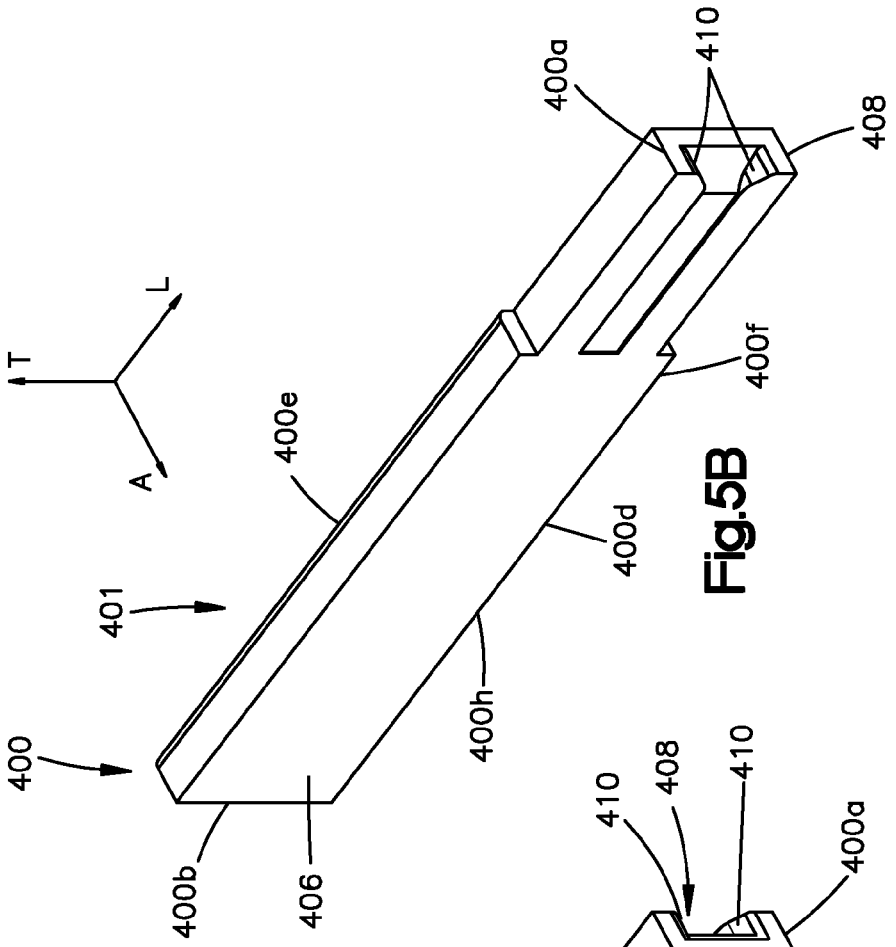
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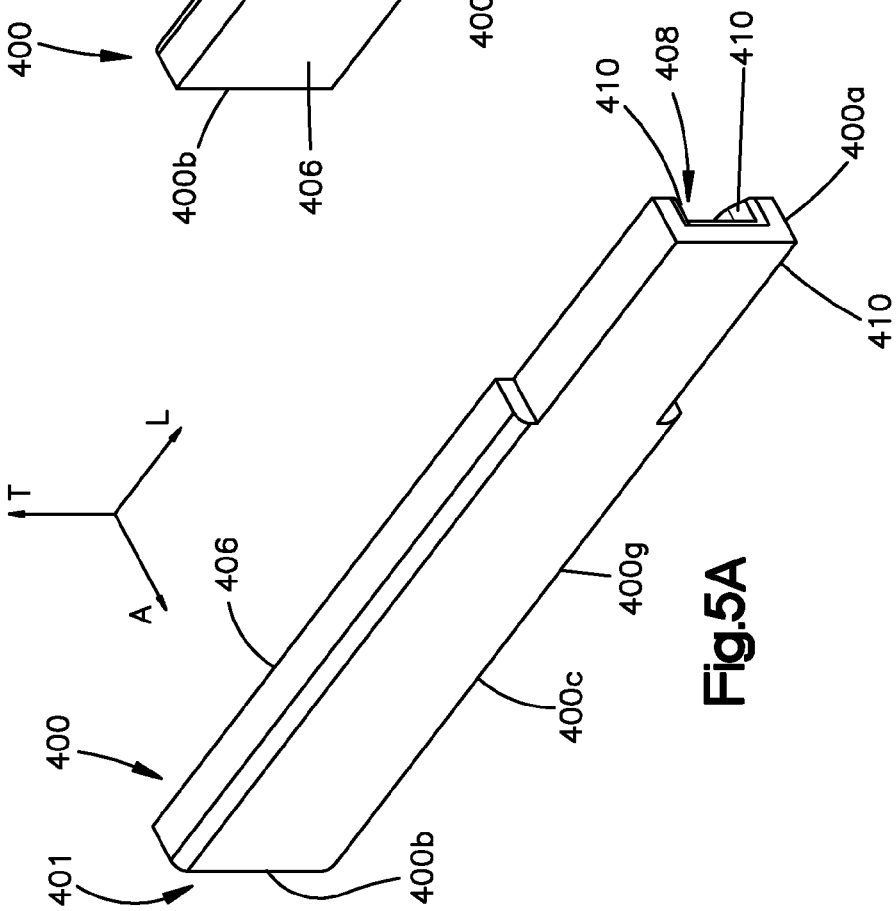
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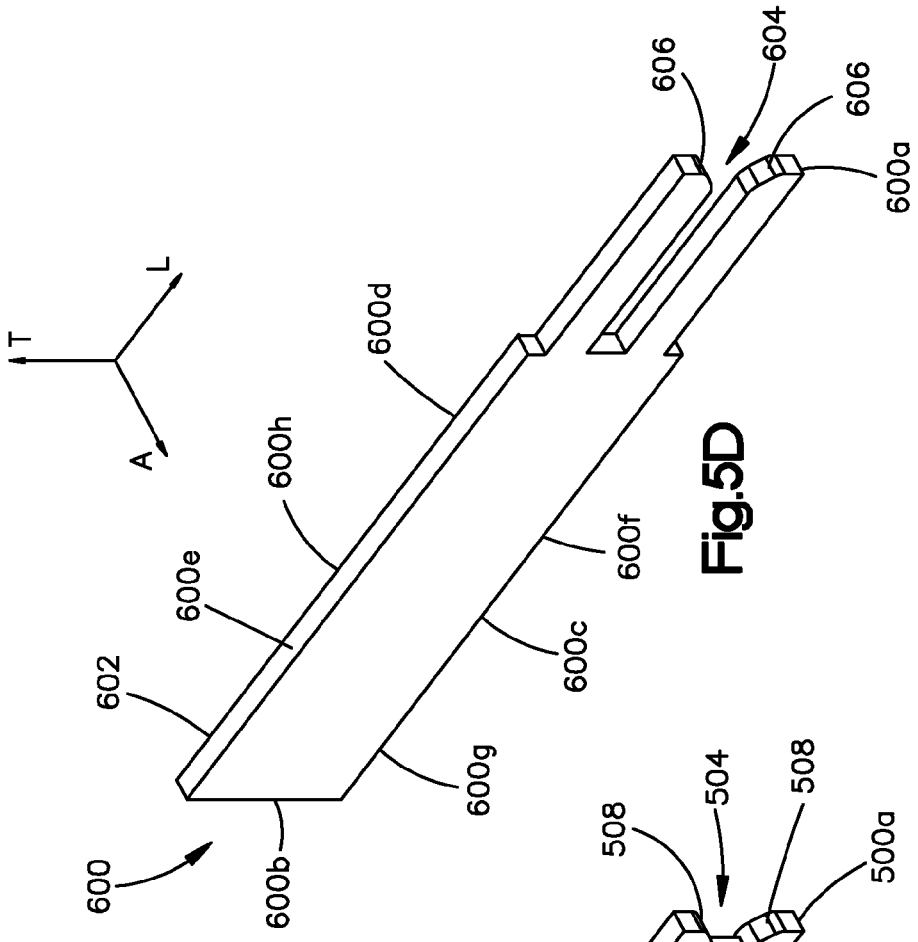
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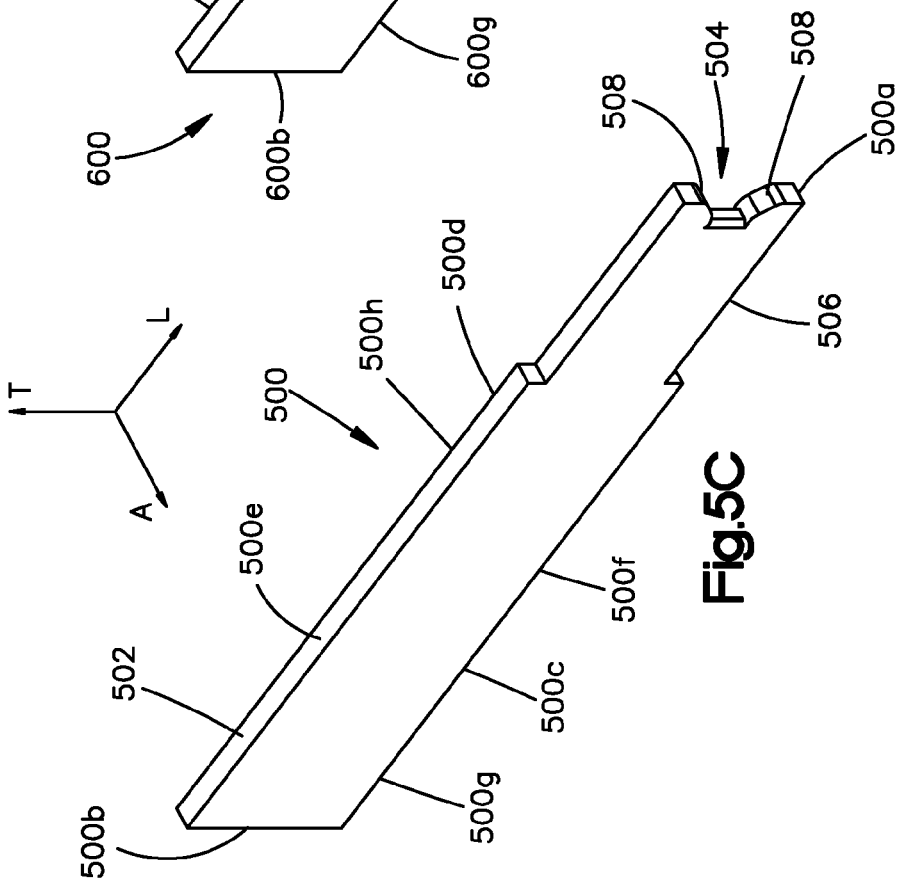
Fig.5D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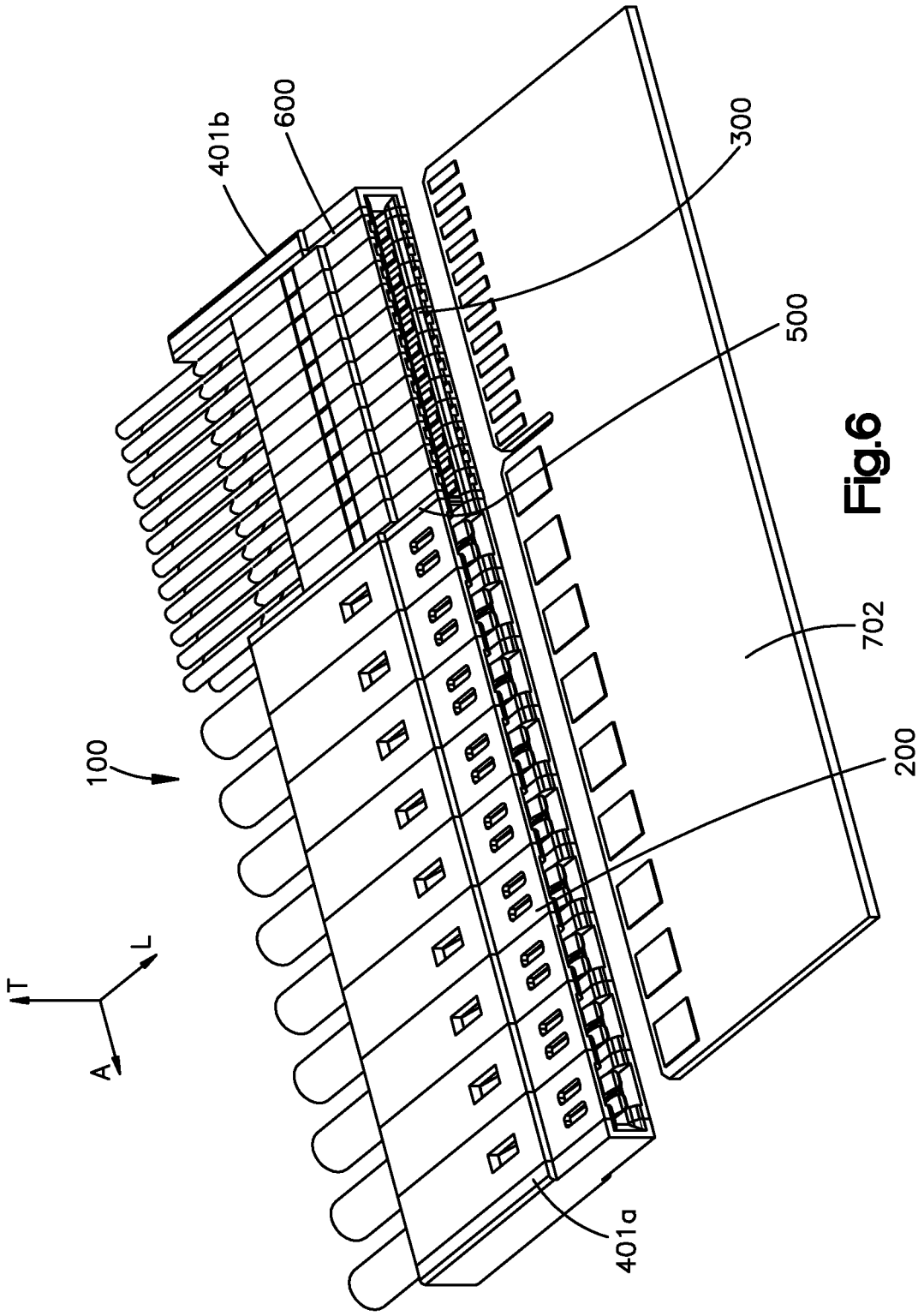

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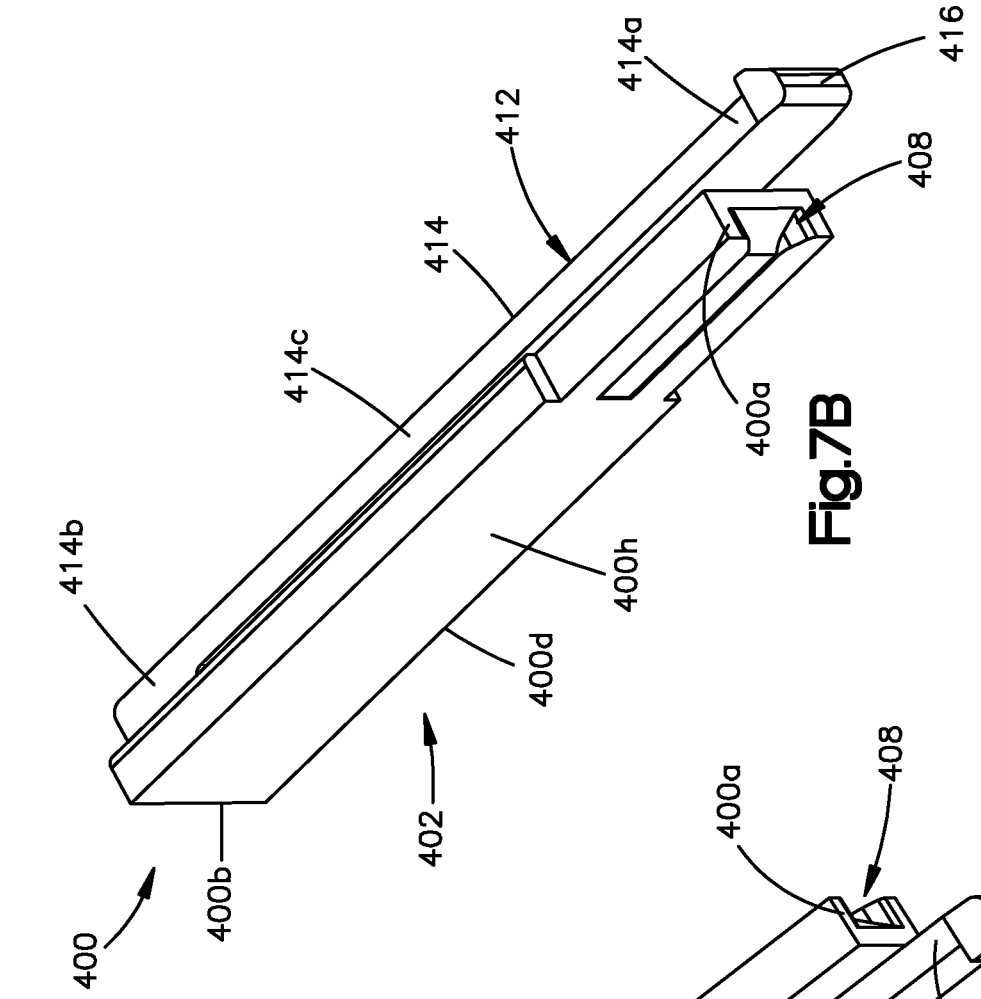
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Fig.7B

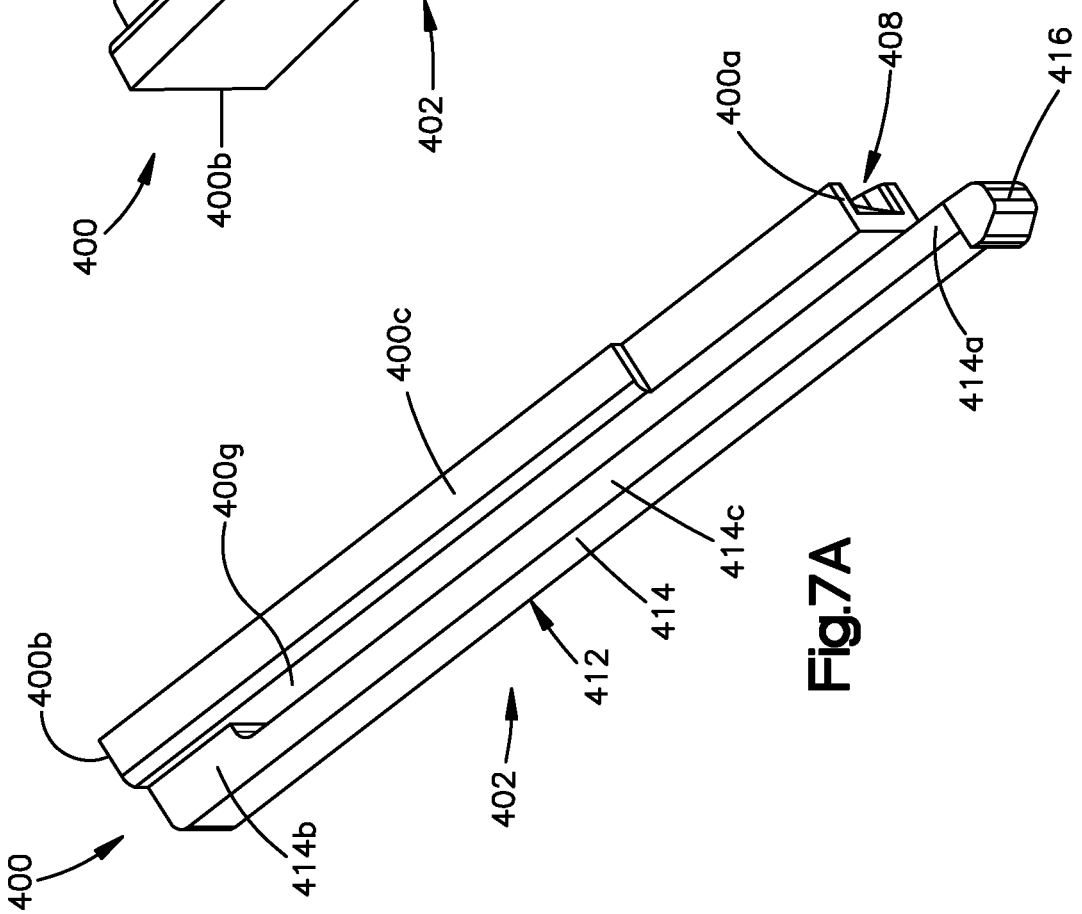
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Fig.7A

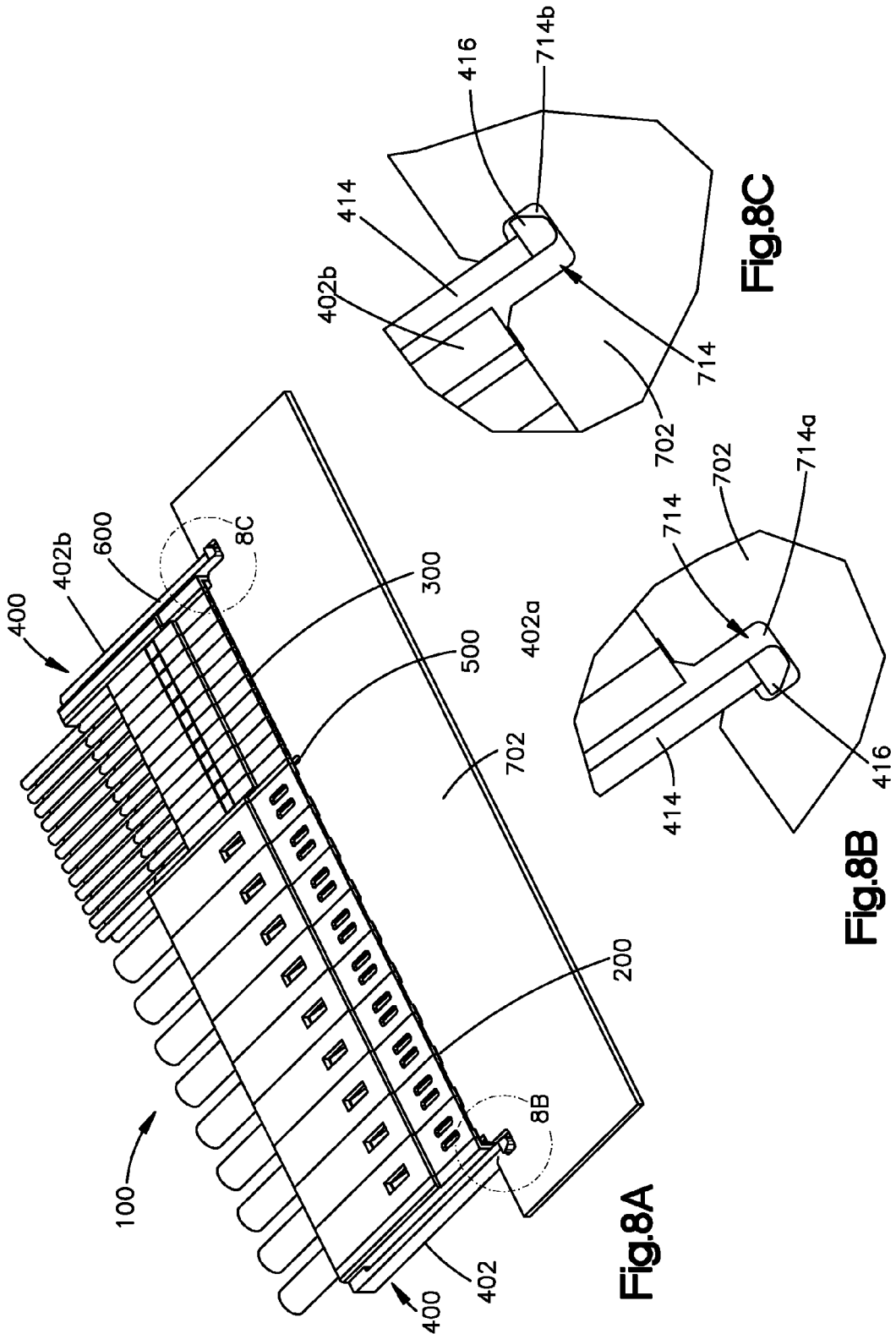
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Fig.8C
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Fig.8B

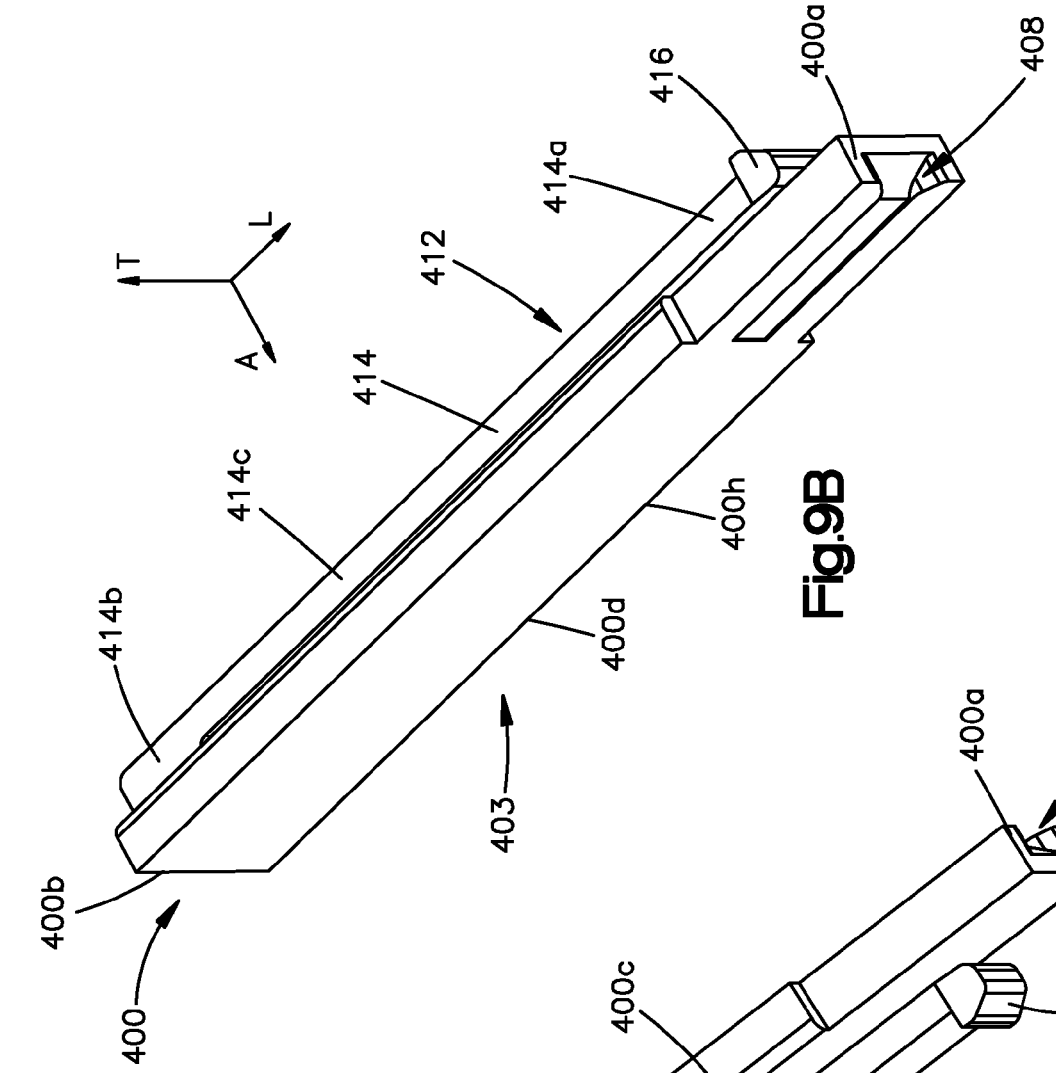
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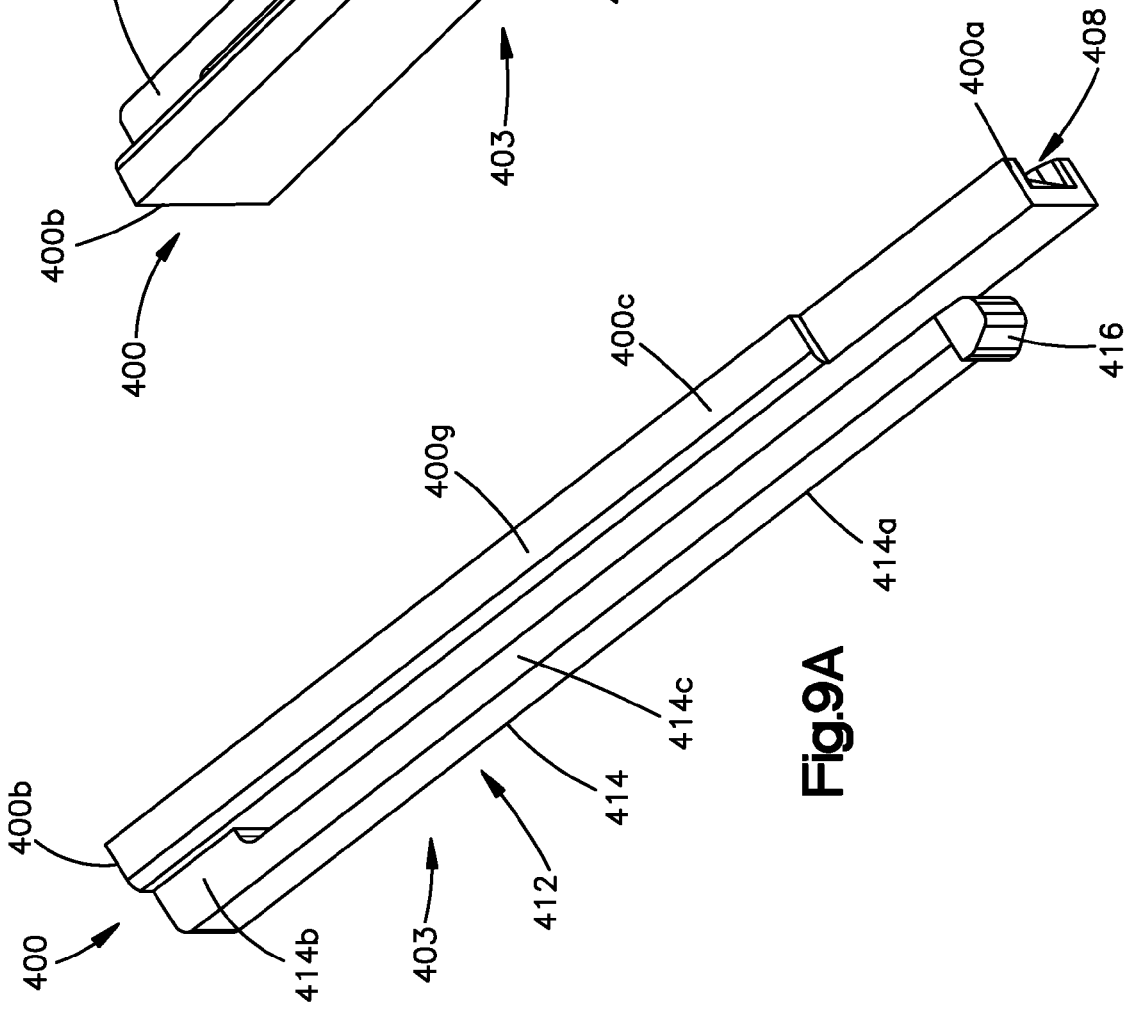
Fig.9B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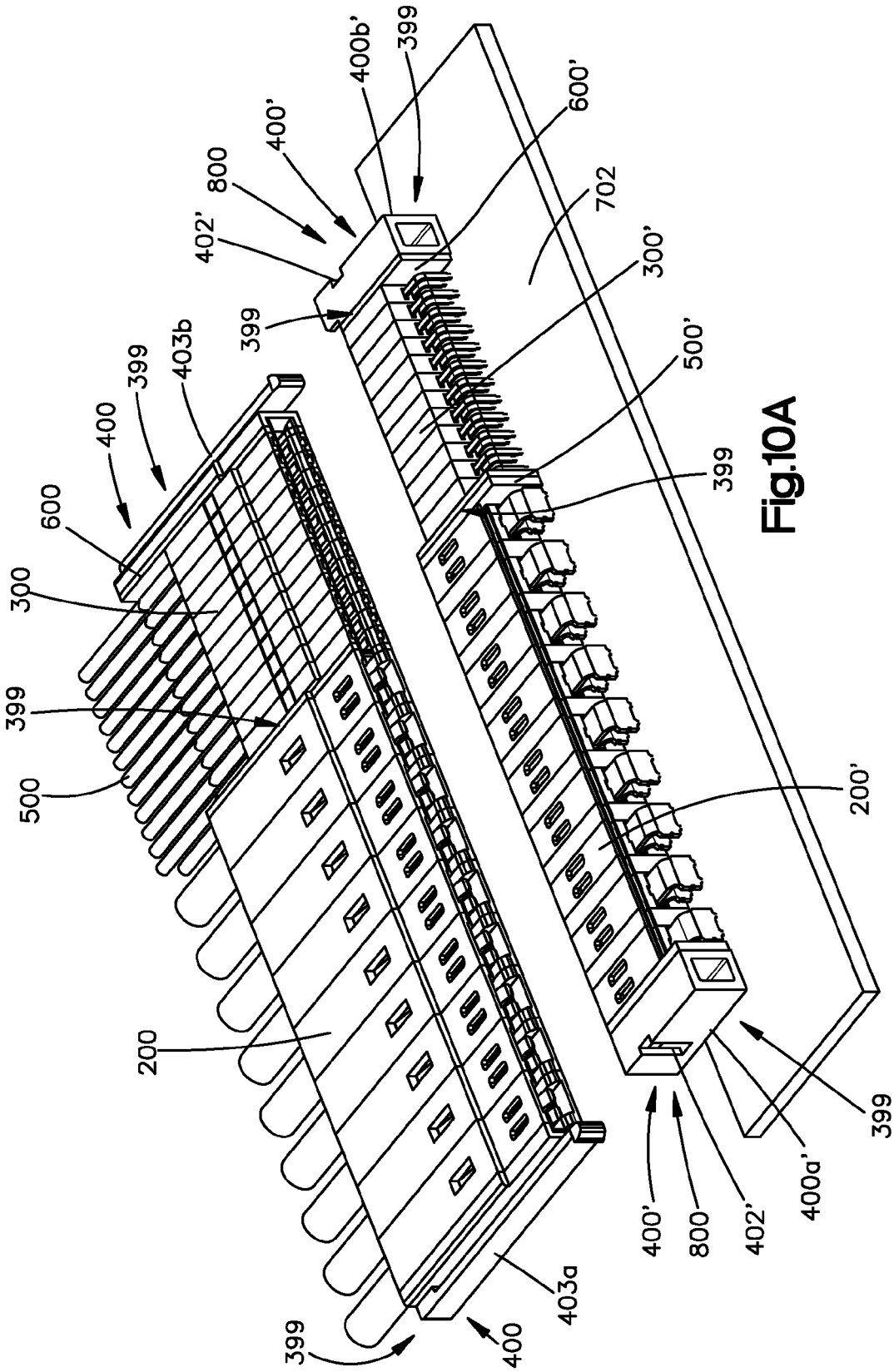
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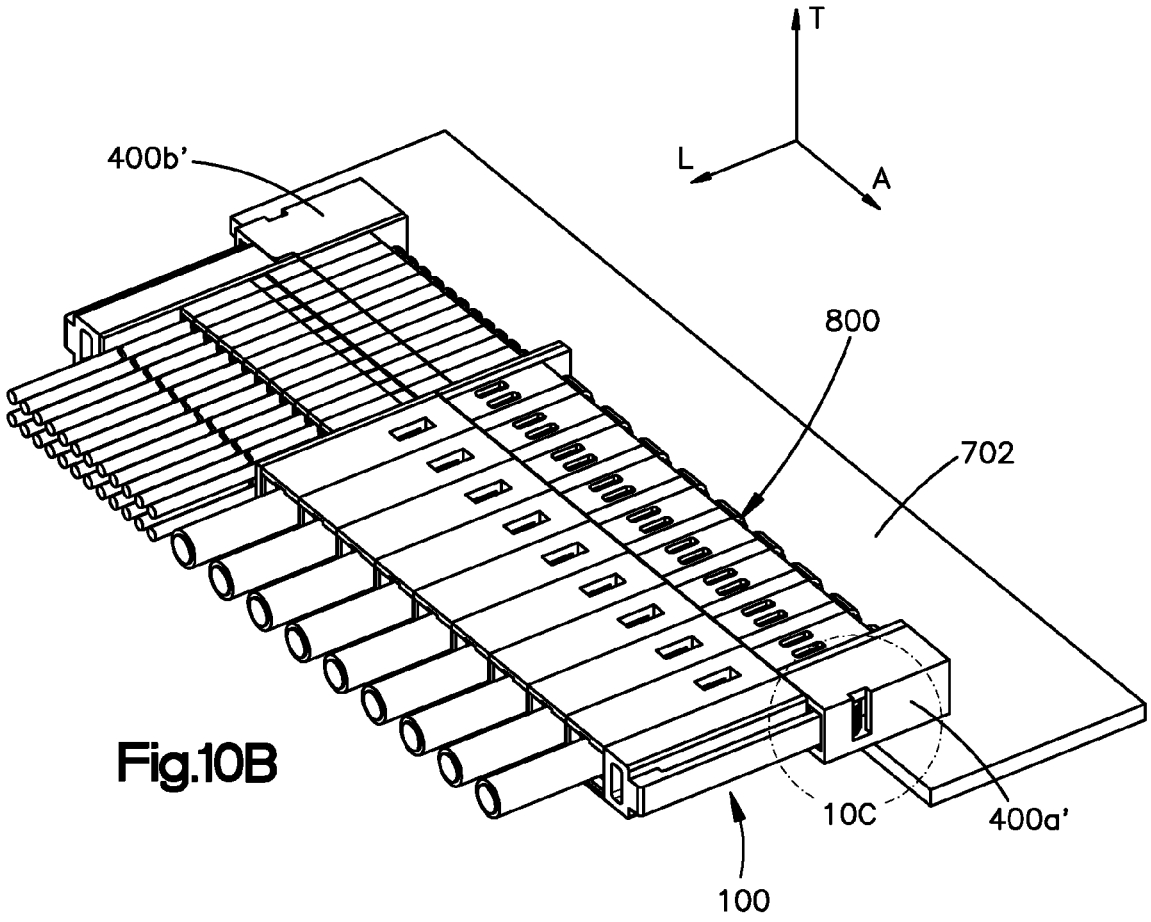
Fig.10A



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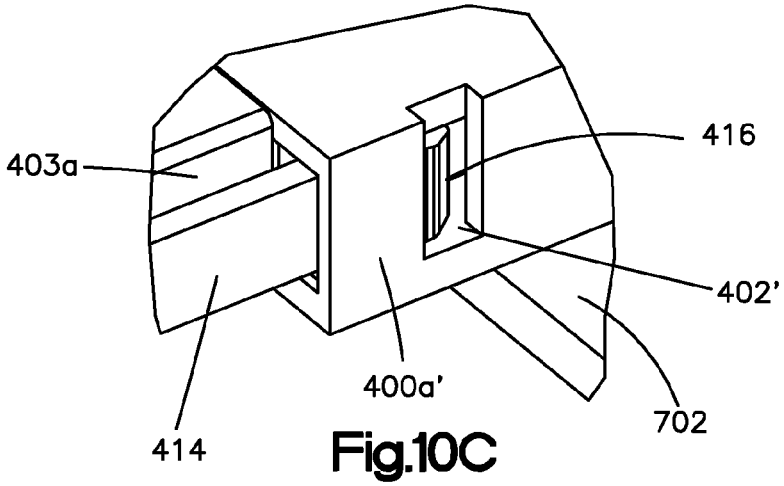

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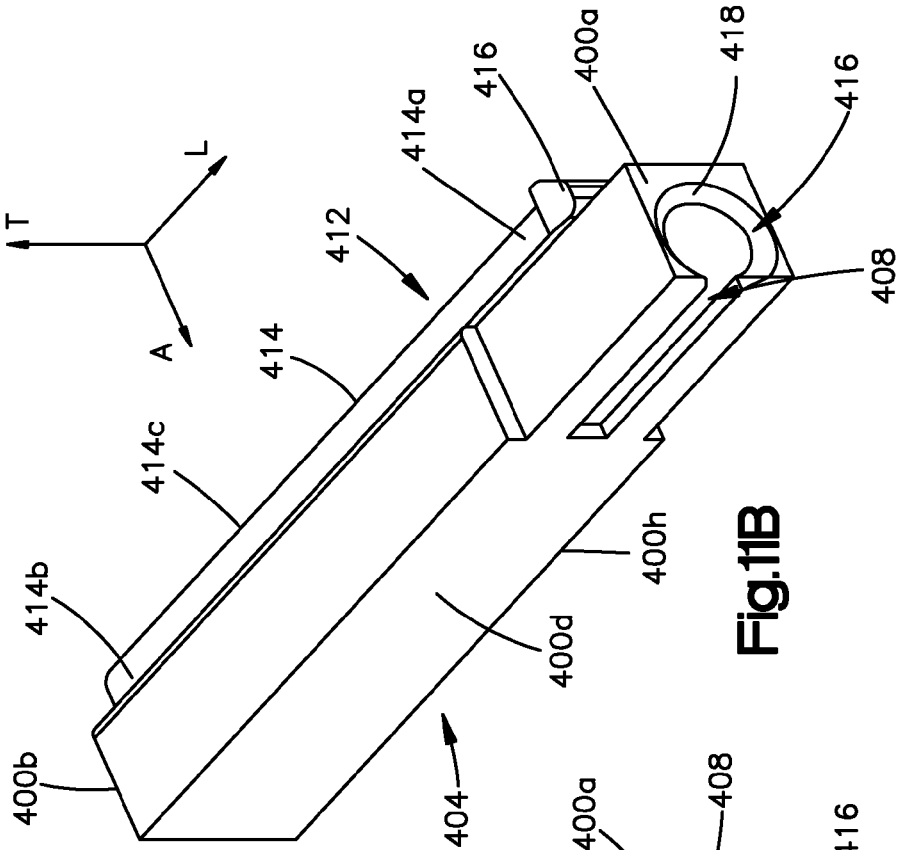

Fig.11B

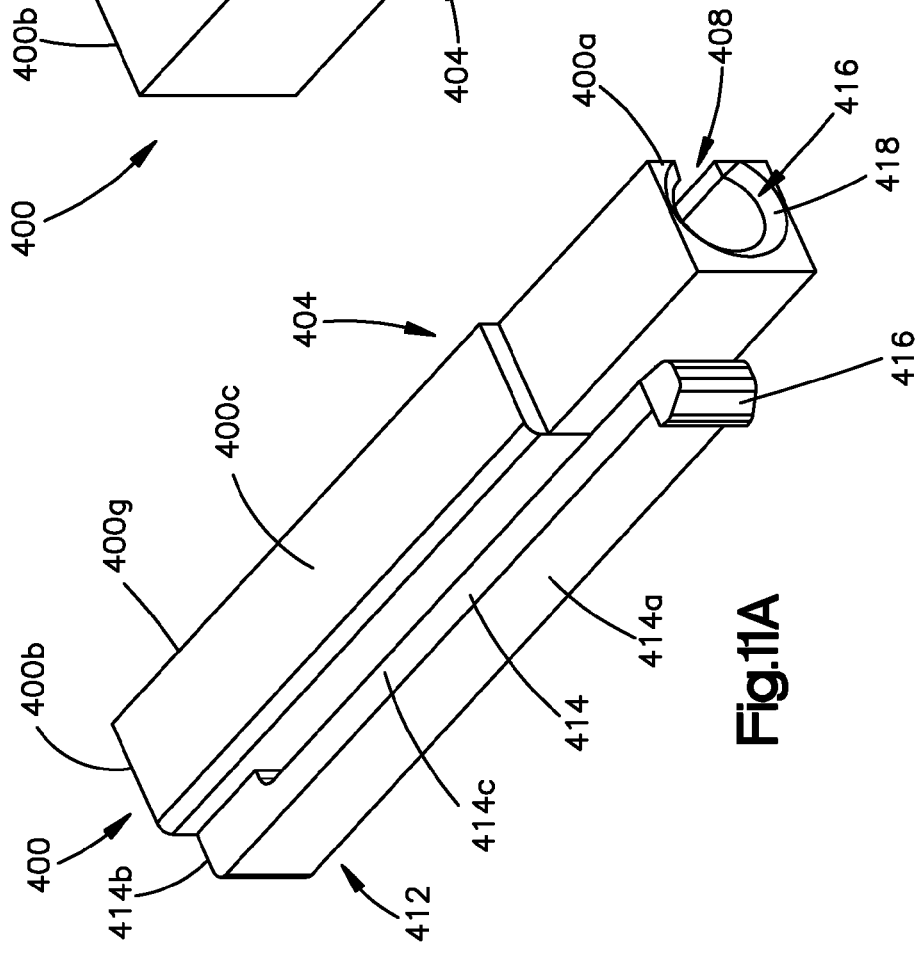

Fig.11A

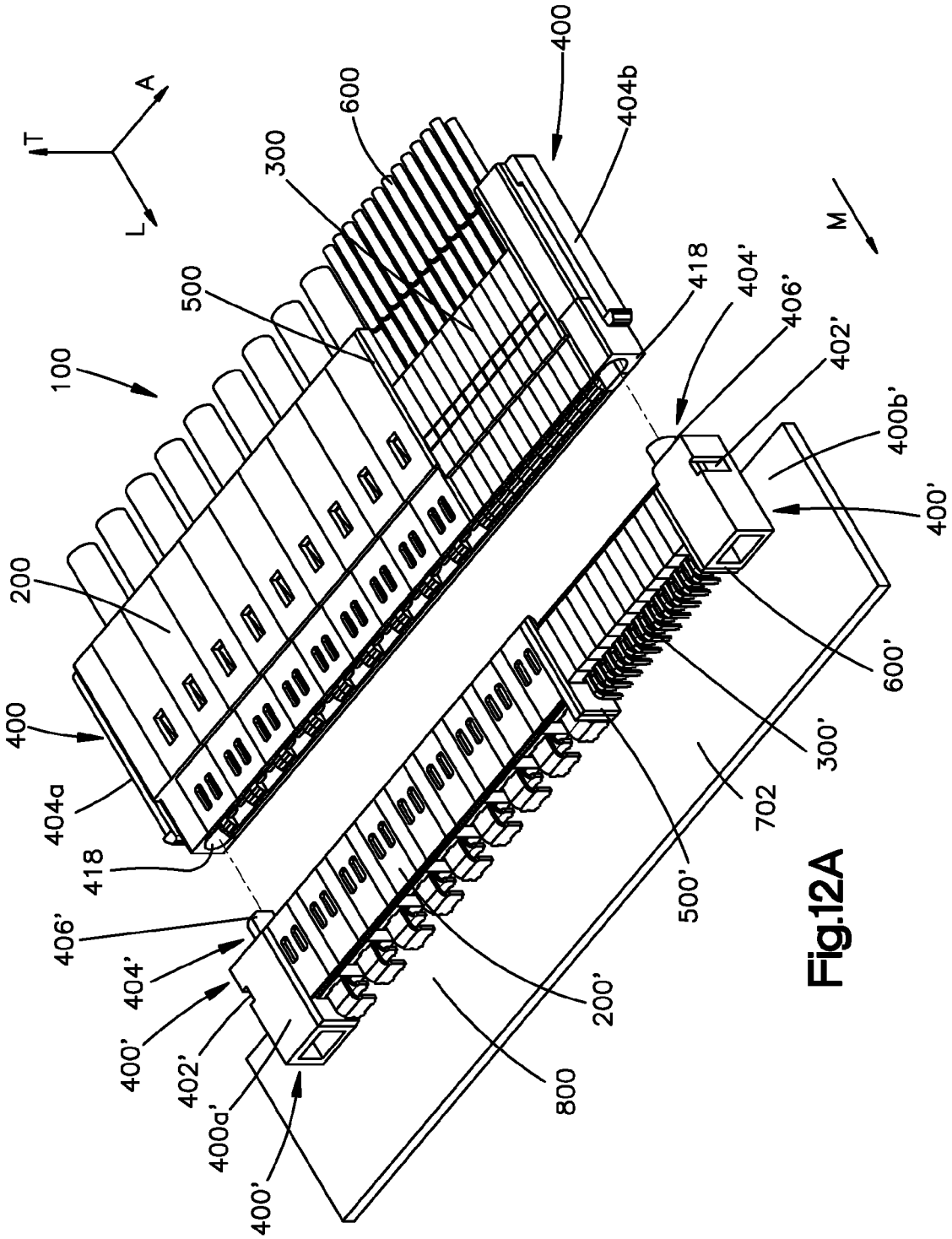
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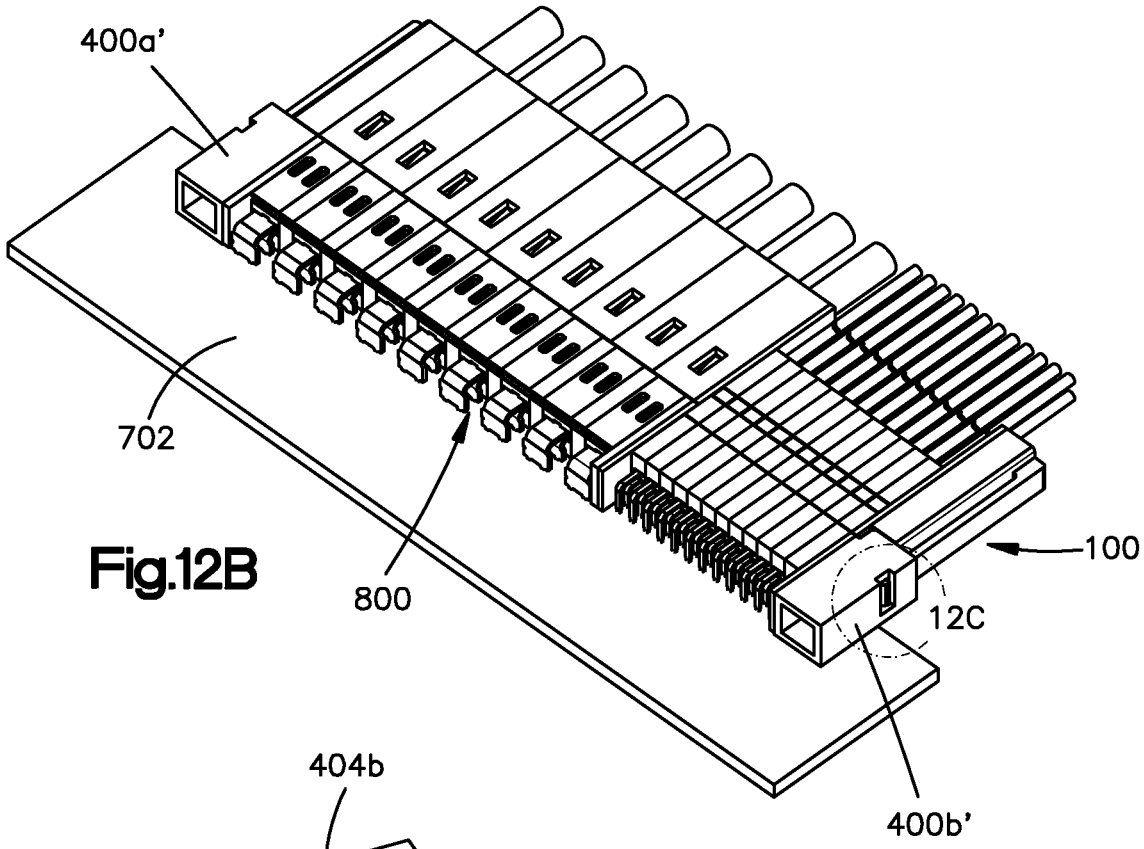
Fig.12A



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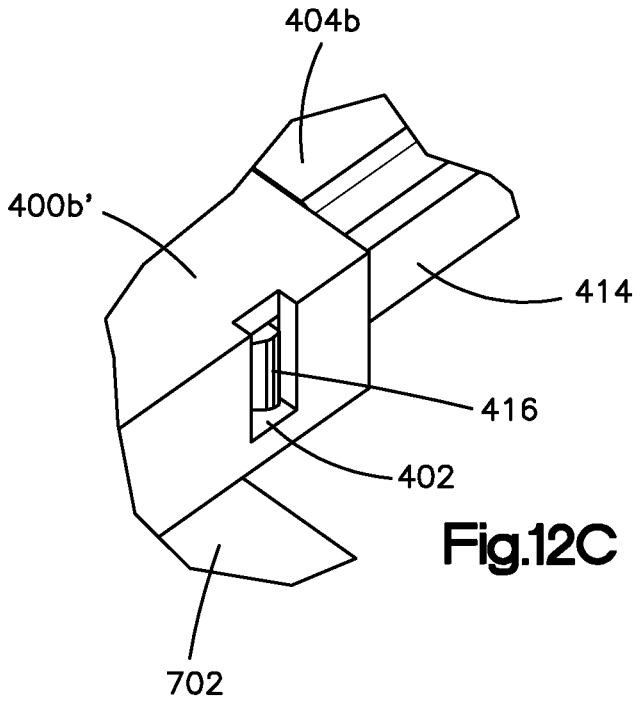

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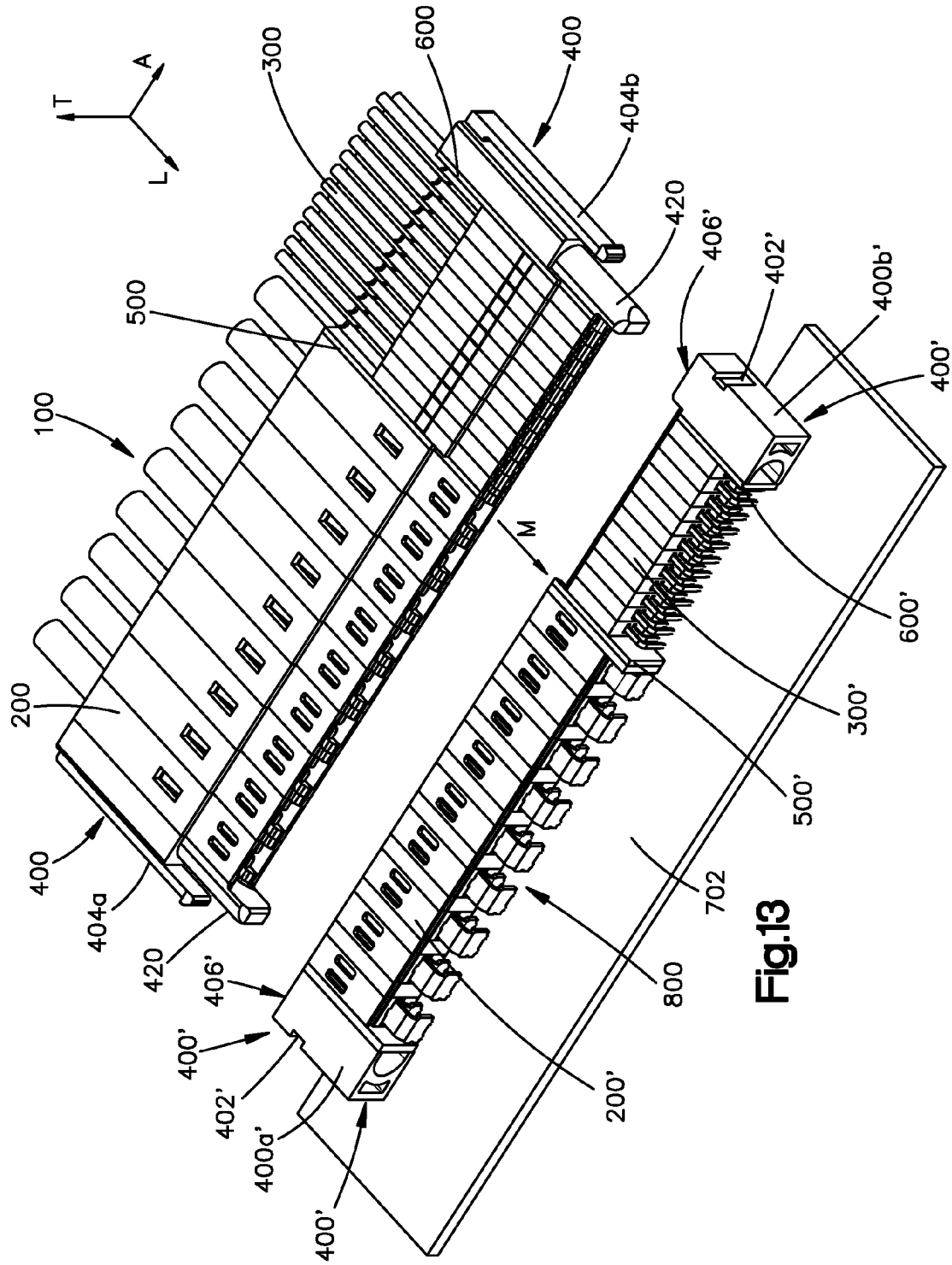
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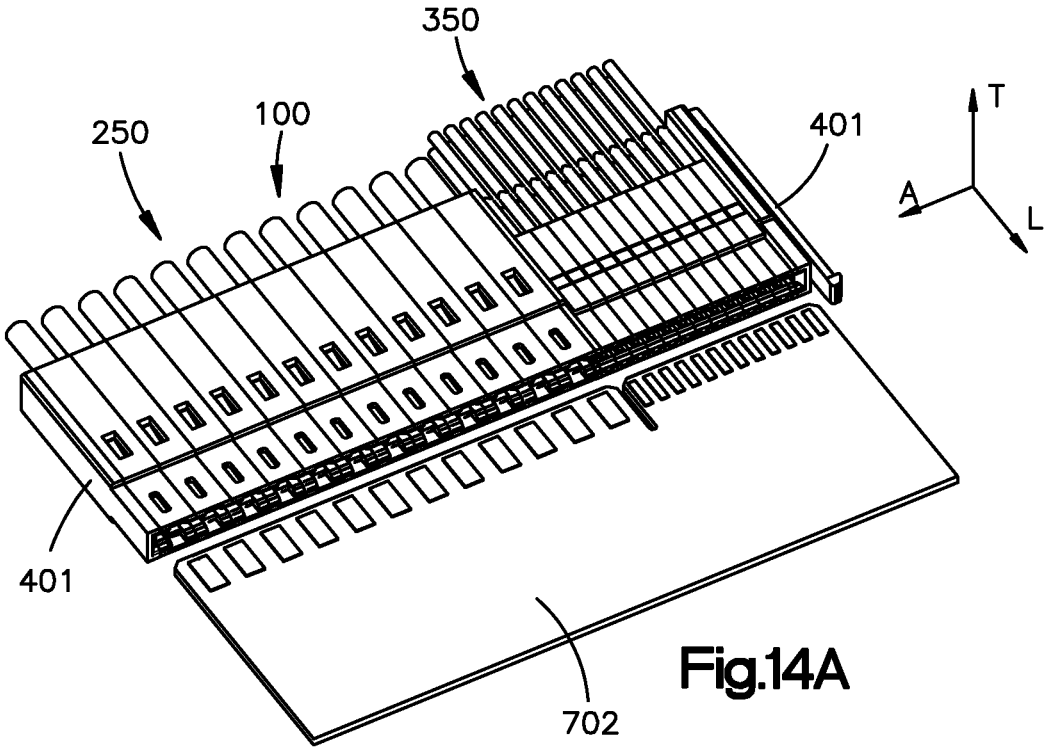
Fig.13



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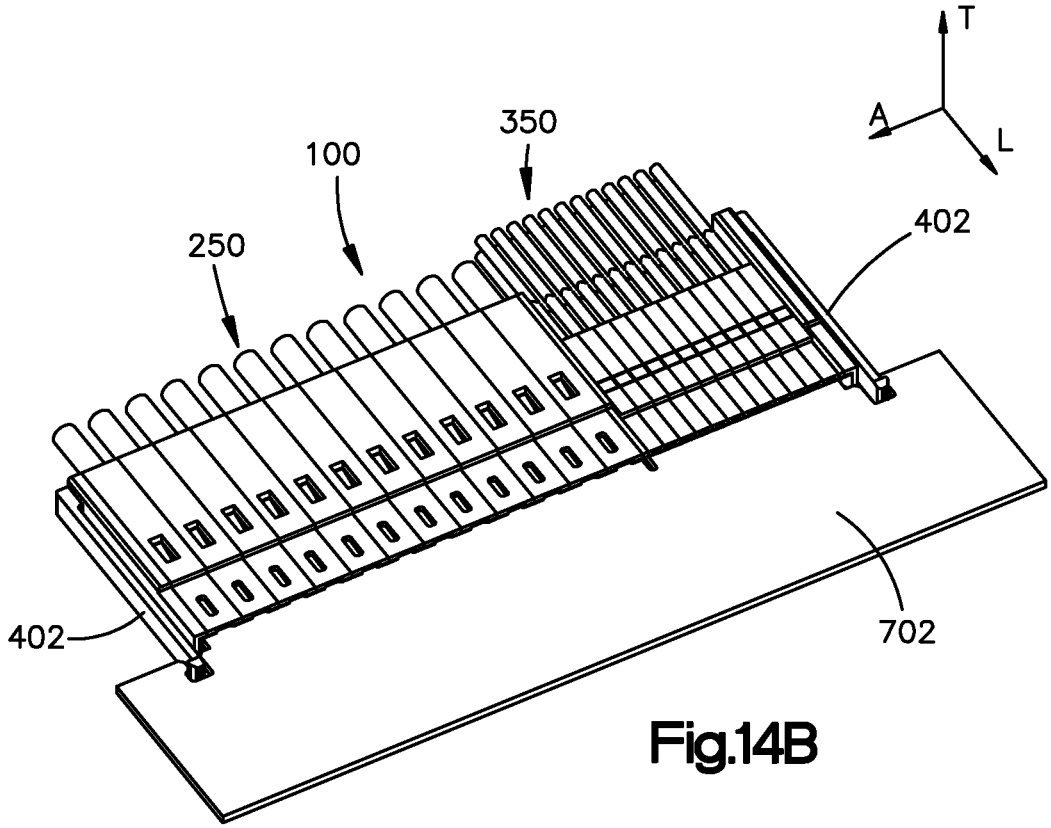

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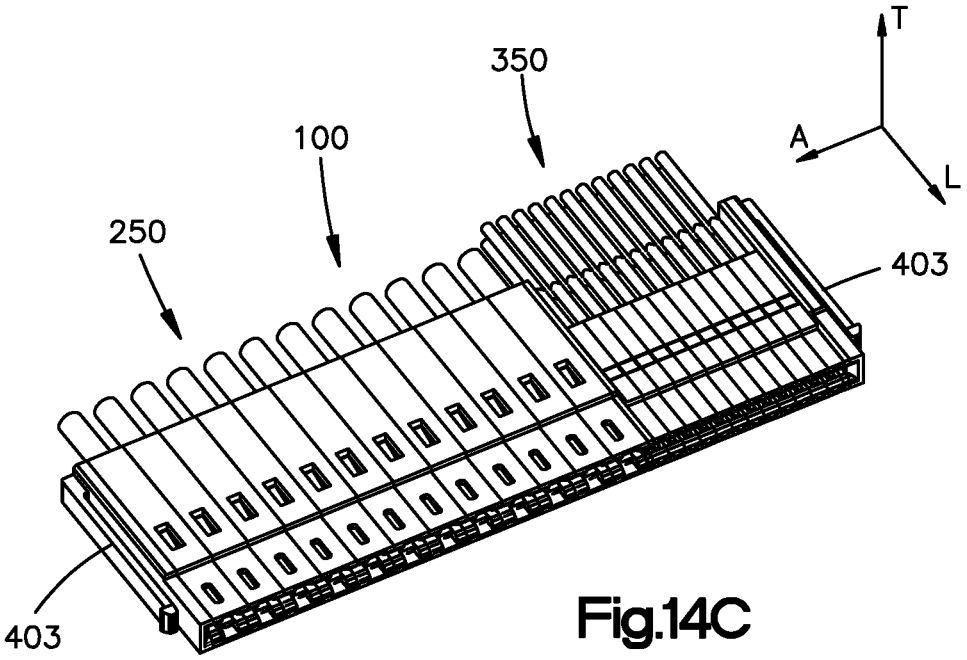

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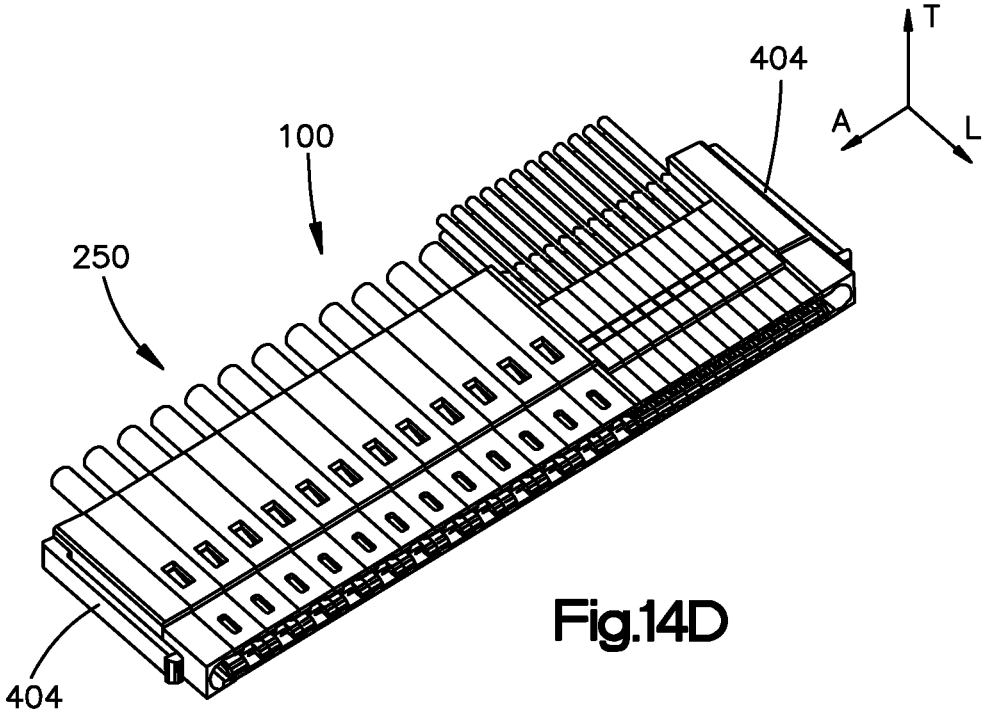

Fig.14D

ELECTRICAL CONNECTOR ASSEMBLY

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Application No. 61/595,834 filed Feb. 7, 2012, the contents of which are hereby incorporated by reference herein in its entirety.

BACKGROUND

Electronics devices, such as digital communications devices, continue to evolve at a fast pace. As this evolution continues, it is desirable for such devices to transfer increasing amounts of data at higher speeds, which may cause the power requirements of those devices to change. As data rates and power requirements change, new electrical connectors may be required to interconnect the evolving devices. However, designing and fabricating updated electrical connectors can be expensive and time consuming. For instance, the production of a new electrical connector typically requires tooling changes, production facility reconfiguration, and the significant time and capital expenses associated therewith.

SUMMARY

In accordance with an embodiment, an electrical connector comprises a first connector housing supporting a plurality of electrical power contacts. The first connector housing has a first housing body that defines a front end, a rear end spaced from the front end along an mating direction, and opposed first and second sides extending between the front and rear ends and spaced apart from each other along a second direction that extends substantially perpendicular to the mating direction. The first housing body further defines a receptacle at the front end that is elongate along the second direction so as to define a power mating interface, wherein the receptacle extends through the first and second sides. The electrical connector can further include a second connector housing supporting a plurality of electrical signal contacts. The second connector housing has a second housing body that defines a front end, a rear end spaced from the front end along the mating direction, and opposed first and second sides extending between the front and rear ends of the second connector housing and spaced apart from each other along the second direction. The first side of the second connector is disposed adjacent the second side of the first connector housing. The second housing body further defines a receptacle at the front end that extends along the second direction so as to define a signal mating interface, wherein the receptacle of the second connector housing extends through the first and second sides of the second connector housing. The electrical connector can further include a first end member that is separate from the first connector housing and is configured to be coupled to the first side of the first connector housing so as to close one end of the receptacle of the first connector housing. The electrical connector can further include a second end member that is separate from the second connector housing and is configured to be coupled to the second side of the second connector housing so as to close one end of the receptacle of the second connector housing.

In accordance with another embodiment, a method includes the steps of coupling a first end member to a first side of a first connector housing. The first connector housing supports a plurality of electrical power contacts and defines a receptacle that is elongate along a mating end of the first connector housing from the first side to an opposed second side that is spaced from the first side, wherein the receptacle defines a mating interface and extends through the first and second sides. The method further includes the step of coupling a second end member to a second side of a second connector housing. The second connector housing supports a plurality of electrical signal contacts and defining a receptacle that is elongate along a mating end of the second connector housing from the first side of the second connector housing to an opposed second side of the second connector housing that is spaced from the first side of the second connector housing, wherein the receptacle defines a mating interface and extends through the first and second sides. The method further includes the step of closing the receptacle at the first side of the first connector housing by coupling the first end member to the first side of the first connector housing.

In accordance with another embodiment, a kit can include at least one first connector housing supporting a plurality of electrical power contacts. The first connector housing has a first housing body that defines a front end, a rear end spaced from the front end along an mating direction, and opposed first and second sides that extend between the front and rear ends and are spaced apart from each other along a second direction that extends substantially perpendicular to the mating direction. The first housing body further defines a receptacle at the front end that is elongate along the second direction so as to define a power mating interface, wherein the receptacle extends through the first and second sides. The kit further includes at least one second connector housing supporting a plurality of electrical signal contacts. The second connector housing has a second housing body that defines a front end, a rear end spaced from the front end along the mating direction, and opposed first and second sides that extend between the front and rear ends of the second connector housing and are spaced apart from each other along the second direction. The second housing body further defines a receptacle at the front end that extends along the second direction so as to define a signal mating interface, wherein the receptacle extends through the first and second sides of the second connector housing. The kit further includes a plurality of closure members configured to be coupled to at least one of the first and second to respective sides of at least one of the first and second connector housings so as to close at least one end of the corresponding receptacle.

In accordance with another embodiment, a method of assembling an electrical assembly includes the step of providing or teaching the use of a first connector housing supporting a plurality of electrical power contacts and defining a first receptacle that extends along a front end of the first connector housing and through opposed first and second sides of the first connector housing, a second connector housing supporting a plurality of electrical signal contacts and defining a second receptacle that extends along a front end of the second connector housing and through opposed first and second sides of the second connector housing, and first and second end members configured to close respective ones of the first and second receptacles. The method can further include teaching the step of mounting the first end member to the first side of the first connector housing. The method can further include teaching the step of mounting the second end member to the second side of the second connector housing.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The foregoing summary, as well as the following detailed description of an example embodiment of the application, will be better understood when read in conjunction with the

appended drawings, in which there is shown in the drawings example embodiments for the purposes of illustration. It should be understood, however, that the application is not limited to the precise arrangements and instrumentalities shown. In the drawings:

FIG. **1** is a perspective view of an electrical assembly including a power connector housing, a signal connector housing, and a plurality of closure members;

FIGS. **2**A-C are perspective views of the power connector housing illustrated in FIG. **1** and a pair of power contact inserts configured to be disposed in the power connector housing;

FIGS. **3**A-B are perspective views of the signal connector housing illustrated in FIG. **1** and a signal contact insert configured to be disposed in the signal connector housing;

FIGS. **4**A-C are perspective views of printed circuit boards configured to be mated to various embodiments of the electrical assembly illustrated in FIG. **1**;

FIGS. **5**A-D are perspective views of the closure members illustrated in FIG. **1**;

FIG. **6** is a perspective view of the electrical assembly illustrated in FIG. **1** mated to the printed circuit board illustrated in FIG. **4**A;

FIGS. **7**A-B are perspective views of closure members constructed in accordance with an alternative embodiment;

FIG. **8**A-C are perspective views of an electrical assembly constructed in accordance with the an alternative embodiment utilizing the closure members illustrated in FIGS. **7**A-B and mated to the printed circuit board illustrated in FIG. **4**C;

FIGS. **9**A-B are perspective views of modular closure members constructed in accordance with another alternative embodiment;

FIG. **10**A is a perspective view of a first electrical assembly constructed in accordance with the an alternative embodiment utilizing the closure members illustrated in FIGS. **9**A-B and a second electrical assembly configured as a header connector mounted to a substrate;

FIGS. **10**B-C are perspective views of the first and second electrical assemblies illustrated in FIG. **10**A mated to one another;

FIGS. **11**A-B are perspective views of modular closure members constructed in accordance with still another alternative embodiment;

FIG. **12**A is a perspective view of a first electrical assembly constructed in accordance with an alternative embodiment utilizing the closure members illustrated in FIGS. **11**A-B and a second electrical assembly configured as a header connector mounted to a substrate;

FIGS. **12**B-C are perspective views of the first and second electrical assemblies illustrated in FIG. **12**A mated to one another;

FIG. **13** is a perspective view of a first electrical assembly constructed in accordance with an alternative embodiment utilizing an alternative embodiment of the closure members illustrated in FIGS. **11**A-B;

FIG. **14**A is a perspective view of an alternative embodiment of the electrical assembly illustrated in FIG. **6**, constructed utilizing an alternative embodiment of the power connector housing;

FIG. **14**B is a perspective view of an alternative embodiment of the electrical assembly illustrated in FIG. **8**, constructed utilizing an alternative embodiment of the power connector housing;

FIG. **14**C is a perspective view of an alternative embodiment of the first electrical assembly illustrated in FIG. **10**A, constructed utilizing an alternative embodiment of the power connector housing; and

FIG. **14**D is a perspective view of an alternative embodiment of the first electrical assembly illustrated in FIG. **12**A, constructed utilizing an alternative embodiment of the power connector housing.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

For convenience, the same or equivalent elements in the various embodiments illustrated in the drawings have been identified with the same reference numerals. Certain terminology is used in the following description for convenience only and is not limiting. The words "left", "right", "front", "rear", "upper," and "lower" designate directions in the drawings to which reference is made. The words "forward", "forwardly", "rearward", "inner," "inward," "inwardly," "outer," "outward," "outwardly," "upward," "upwardly," "downward," and "downwardly" refer to directions toward and away from, respectively, the geometric center of the object referred to and designated parts thereof. The terminology intended to be non-limiting includes the above-listed words, derivatives thereof and words of similar import.

Referring initially to FIGS. **1** and **10**A, an electrical connector assembly can includes a first electrical connector **100** and a second electrical connector **800** configured to be mated with the first electrical connector **100**. The electrical connector assembly can further include one or more complementary electrical devices configured to be electrically connected to the first and second electrical connectors. For instance, the electrical connector assembly can include at least one such as a plurality of power cables **250** configured to be electrically connected to the first electrical connector **100**, and at least one such as a plurality of signal cables **350** configured to be electrically connected to the first electrical connector **100**. The electrical connector assembly can further include one or more substrates **700** that can be configured as printed circuit boards **702**. For instance, the first connector **100** can be mated to a substrate **700** (see FIG. **6**), and the second connector **800** can be mounted to a substrate **700** (see FIGS. **10**A-B). Thus, it should be appreciated that each of the first and second electrical connectors **100** and **800** are configured to be mated to a complementary electrical device, and are further configured to be mounted to a complementary electrical device. In accordance with the illustrated embodiment, the first electrical connector **100** is a receptacle connector and the second electrical connector **800** is configured as a header connector that is received by the first electrical connector **100** when the first and second electrical connectors are mated, thought it should be appreciated that the first electrical connector **100** can alternatively be configured as a header connector and the second electrical connector **800** can alternatively be configured as a receptacle connector as desired.

Referring now to FIG. **1**, the first electrical connector **100** can include at least one or both of a first connector housing **200** that can be a power connector housing, and a second connector housing **300** that can be a signal connector housing. The first connector housing **200** and the second connector housing **300** can be integrally molded together. The first electrical connector **100** can further include at least one such as a plurality of first electrical contacts such as electrical power contacts **204** configured to be supported by the first connector housing **200**, and further include at least one such as a plurality of second electrical contacts such as electrical signal contacts **304** configured to be supported by the second connector housing **300**. The first connector housing **200** is configured to receive power cables **250** that are configured to be coupled to the electrical power contacts **204** so as to place the power cables **250** in electrical communication with the elec-

trical power contacts **204**. The second connector housing **300** is configured to receive the signal cables **350** that are configured to be coupled to the electrical signal contacts **304** so as to place the signal cables **350** in electrical communication with the electrical signal contacts **304**. As shown in FIG. **13**, the second connector housing **300** can include a plurality of holes that are defined by the second connector housing **300** and are positioned over the electrical signal contacts **304**. One first plurality of holes can be heat holes, and a second plurality of holes can be electrical signal contact **304** retention holes.

Referring now to FIGS. **2**A-C, the first connector housing **200** includes a housing body **202** that defines a front end **200***a*, an opposed rear end **200***b* that is spaced from the front end **200***a* along a first or longitudinal mating direction L, opposed first and second sides **200***c* and **200***d* that extend between the front and rear ends **200***a-b* and are spaced apart from each other along a second lateral direction A that extends substantially perpendicular to the longitudinal direction L, an upper end **200***e*, and an opposed lower end **200***f* that is spaced from the upper end **200***e* along a third or transverse direction T that extends substantially perpendicular to both the longitudinal direction L and the lateral direction A. The housing body **202** is illustrated in FIG. **2**A in an orientation such that the transverse direction T is vertical and the longitudinal and lateral directions L and A are horizontal, though it should be appreciated that the orientation of the housing body **202**, and of the first electrical connector **100**, can differ during use.

The first connector housing **200** can define a receptacle **206** that extends into the front end **200***a* of the housing body **202** along the longitudinal direction L, and can be elongate along the lateral direction A. For instance, the receptacle **206** can extend through one or both of the first and second sides **200***c* and **200***d*. The front end **200***a* of the housing body **202** can define a power mating interface **208**, such that the receptacle **206** can be disposed at the power mating interface **208**. The first connector housing **200**, and thus the first electrical connector **100**, is configured to mate with a complementary electrical device at the power mating interface **208**. For example, in accordance with the illustrated embodiment, the power mating interface **208** can be configured to receive at least a portion of a substrate **700**, such as a printed circuit board **702**, that is inserted into the receptacle **206**. Therefore, the receptacle **206** can be said to extend into the first connector housing **200** along a mating direction M that can be, for instance, the longitudinal direction L. As described above, the receptacle **206** can be open at the first and second sides **200***c* and **200***d* of the first connector housing **200**. Therefore, it can also be said that the receptacle **206** extends into the front end **200***a* along a second direction that can be, for instance, the lateral direction A, such that the power mating interface **208** is open at the first and second sides **200***c* and **200***d* of the first connector housing **200**.

The first electrical connector **100** can further include at least one such as a plurality of closure members **399**. The closure members **399**, which can be made from metal, plastic, nylon, etc., can include at least one such as a plurality of end members **400** and at least one such as a plurality of interconnect members **500**. The end members **400** are configured to be coupled, releasably attached, or integrally molded to the first connector housing **100**, for instance at one or both of the first and second sides **200***c* and **200***d* so as to close the corresponding first open lateral end of the receptacle **206**. As will be appreciated from the description below, the end members **400** are configured to be coupled to the second connector housing **300** so as to close one or both open ends of a respective receptacle **306** defined by the second connector housing **300**. The interconnect member **500**, which can be a PCB keying guide or keying wall, can be configured to be coupled to one or both of the first connector housing **200** and the second connector housing **300**. For instance the interconnect member **500** can be configured to close the corresponding second open lateral end of the receptacle **206** that is opposite the first open lateral end of the receptacle **206**. Furthermore, the interconnect member **500** can be configured to close an open lateral end of the receptacle **306** of the second connector housing **300** that is opposite to the open lateral end of the receptacle **306** that is closed by the respective end member **400**.

The first electrical connector **100** can further include at least one spacer member **600** that can be disposed between one of the closure members, for instance end members **400**, and a respective one of the first and second connector housings **200** and **300**. In this regard, the end members **400** can be coupled directly to the connector housings **200** and **300**, for instance affixed to the connector housings **200** and **300**, or can be coupled indirectly to the connector housings **200** and **300**, for instance affixed to a spacer member **600** which can in turn affixed to the respective first and second connector housings **200** or **300**.

Referring also to FIGS. **2**A-C, the electrical power contacts **204** can define respective mating ends **205** configured to be mated to the electrical device that is mated to the first connector housing **200**, and respective mounting ends that are configured to be placed in electrical connection with respective ones of the power cables **250**. The electrical power contacts **204** can be supported by the housing body **202** such that the respective mating ends **205** are disposed in the receptacle **206** at the power mating interface **208**. The first connector housing **200** can further define at least one cavity **210** that extends into the rear end **200***b* of the housing body **202**. The cavity **210** can be defined by an upper wall disposed at the upper end **200***e*, a lower wall disposed at the lower end **200***f*, and opposed side walls disposed at the first and second sides **200***c* and **200***d* of the first housing body **202**.

The first electrical connector **100** can further include at least one such as a plurality of power contact inserts **212**. For instance, the power contact inserts **212** are configured to be received in the first connector housing **200**, for instance in the cavity **210**. Alternatively, First connector housing **200** may comprise two or more power contact inserts **212** coupled together along the lateral direction A. The power contact inserts **212** are configured to support respective ones of the electrical power contacts **204**. The first housing body **202** can include at least one such as a plurality of inner divider walls that extend along the transverse direction T between the upper and lower ends **200***e* and **200***f* in the in the cavity **210**, and are spaced from each other along the lateral direction A. The inner divider walls thus divide the cavity **210** a plurality of, such as two or more, compartments, each compartment sized to receive a respective one of the plurality of power contact inserts **212**. It should be appreciated that the power contact inserts **212** can be configured to support any number of electrical power contacts **204** as desired.

For example, a first power contact insert **212***a* can be configured to support a respective one of the electrical power contacts **204** that includes a pair resilient contact beams that are spaced along the transverse direction T. Each of the pair of beams can be forked so as to define a respective split beam. The electrical power contact **204** can be coupled to a respective one of the power cables **250***a*. In accordance with the illustrated embodiment, the first power contact inserts **212** can define a cavity **214***a* configured to receive the respective power contacts **204**. The electrical power contacts **204** can further include a retention tab **216***a* that is configured to

secure the electrical power contacts **204** in place within the cavity **214***a* of the respective first power contact inserts **212***a*. For instance, the first power contact insert **212***a* defines respective openings **218***a* that extend along the transverse direction T and are sized and configured to receive the retention tabs **216***a*. The first power contact insert **212***a* can be inserted into a respective compartment in the cavity **210**. One or both of the first connector housing **200** and the first power contact insert **212***a* can include retention members such that the first power contact insert **212***a* is retained in an inserted position in the respective cavity **210** such that the mating ends of the two pairs of electrical power contacts **204** will be disposed substantially at the power mating interface **208**.

The first electrical connector **100** can include a second power contact insert **212***b* that can be configured to support a single pair of electrical power contact **204** including a pair of transversely spaced resilient contact beams that are not forked, and thus define a solid beam. The second power contact insert **212***b* can be constructed as described above with respect to the first power contact insert **212***a*, but can define a lesser width that the first power contact insert **212***a* along the lateral direction A. For instance, the power contacts **204** supported by the second power contact insert **212***b* can defined a lesser width (for instance half) along the lateral direction A with respect to the power contacts **204** supported by the first power contact inserts **212***a*. Thus, the width of the second power contact inserts **212***b* can be substantially half the width of the first power contact inserts **212***a*. It should further be appreciated that the first connector housing **200** is not limited to the first and second power contact inserts **212***a* and **212***b*, and that the plurality of electrical power contacts **204** can be otherwise disposed into the first connector housing **200**, for instance by stitching the electrical power contacts **204** into the housing body **202**. Furthermore, the first connector housing **200** can include only first power contact inserts **212***a* and no second power contact inserts **212***b*, and conversely can include only second power contact inserts **212***b* and no first power contact inserts **212***a*.

Referring now to FIGS. **3**A-B, the second connector housing **300** includes a second housing body **302** that defines a front end **300***a*, an opposed rear end **300***b* that is spaced from the front end **300***a* along the longitudinal direction L, opposed first and second sides **300***c* and **300***d* that are spaced apart from each other along the lateral direction A, an upper end **300***e*, and an opposed lower end **300***f* that is spaced from the upper end **300***e* along the transverse direction T.

The second connector housing **300** can define a receptacle **306** that extends into the front end **300***a* of the second housing body **302** along the longitudinal direction L. For instance, the receptacle **306** can extend through one or both of the first and second sides **300***c* and **300***d*. The front end **300***a* of the second housing body **302** can define a signal mating interface **308**, such that the receptacle **306** can be disposed at the signal mating interface **308**. The second connector housing **300**, and thus the first electrical connector **100**, is configured to mate with a complementary electrical device at the signal mating interface **308**. For example, in accordance with the illustrated embodiment, the signal mating interface **308** can be configured to receive at least a portion of a substrate **700**, such as a printed circuit board **702**, that is inserted into the receptacle **306**. Therefore, the receptacle **306** can be said to extend into the second connector housing **300** along a mating direction M that can be, for instance, the longitudinal direction L. As described above, the receptacle **306** can be open at the first and second sides **300***c* and **300***d* of the second connector housing **300**. Therefore, it can also be said that the receptacle **306** extends into the front end **300***a* along a second direction that can be, for instance, the lateral direction A, such that the signal mating interface **308** is open at the first and second sides **300***c* and **300***d* of the second connector housing **300**.

The electrical signal contacts **304** can define respective mating ends **305** configured to be mated to the electrical device that is mated to the second connector housing **300**, and respective mounting ends that are configured to be placed in electrical connection with respective ones of the signal cables **350**. The electrical signal contacts **304** can be supported by the housing body **302** such that the respective mating ends **305** are disposed in the receptacle **306** at the signal mating interface **308**. The second connector housing **300** can further define at least one cavity **310** that extends into the rear end **300***b* of the housing body **302**. The cavity **310** can be defined by an upper wall disposed at the upper end **300***e*, a lower wall disposed at the lower end **300***f*, and opposed side walls disposed at the first and second sides **300***c* and **300***d* of the second housing body **302**.

The first electrical connector **100** can further include at least one such as a plurality of signal contact inserts **312**. For instance, the signal contact inserts **312** are configured to be received in the second connector housing **300**, for instance in the cavity **310**. Second connector housing **300** may also comprise two or more signal contact inserts **312** coupled together along the lateral direction A. The signal contact inserts **312** are configured to support respective ones of the electrical signal contacts **304**. The second housing body **302** can include at least one such as a plurality of inner divider walls that extend along the transverse direction T between the upper and lower ends **300***e* and **300***f* in the in the cavity **310**, and are spaced from each other along the lateral direction A. The inner divider walls thus divide the cavity **310** a plurality of, such as two or more, compartments, each compartment sized to receive a respective one of the plurality of signal contact inserts **312**. It should be appreciated that the signal contact inserts **312** can be configured to support any number of electrical signal contacts **304** as desired.

For example, the signal contact insert **312** can be configured to support a respective one of the electrical signal contacts **304** that includes a pair of resilient contact beams that are spaced apart along the transverse direction T. Each contact beam of the electrical signal contact **304** can be coupled to a respective one of the signal cables **350**. In accordance with the illustrated embodiment, the signal contact insert **312** can define a pair of cavities **314** configured to receive the respective contact beams of the electrical signal contact **304**. Each contact beam of the electrical signal contact **304** can further include a retention tab **316** that is configured to secure the electrical respective contact beam of the electrical signal contact **304** in place within a respective one of cavities **314** of the respective signal contact insert **312**. For instance, the signal contact insert **312** defines a pair of openings **318** that extend into the signal contact insert **312** along the transverse direction T, each of the openings **318** open to a respective one of the cavities **314** and sized and configured to receive a respective one of the retention tabs **316** so as to secure the respective contact beam in place within the signal contact insert **312**. The signal contact insert **312** can be inserted into a respective compartment in the cavity **310**. One or both of the second connector housing **300** and the signal contact insert **312** can include retention members such that the signal insert **312** is retained in an inserted position in the respective cavity **310** such that the mating ends **305** of the electrical signal contact **304** will be disposed substantially at the signal mating interface **308**.

In accordance with the illustrated embodiment, the second connector housing **300** is configured to support twelve signal

connector inserts **312**, disposed into the cavity **310** adjacent to one another along the lateral direction A. It should be appreciated that the second connector housing **300** is not limited to the illustrated twelve signal connector inserts **312**, and that the second connector housing **300** can be alternatively constructed with any number of signal connector inserts **312** disposed within the cavity **310** along the lateral direction A in any arrangement as desired. It should further be appreciated that the second connector housing **300** is not limited to the signal connector inserts **312**, and that the plurality of electrical signal contacts **304** can be otherwise disposed into the second connector housing **300**, for instance by stitching the electrical signal contacts **304** into the second housing body **302**.

Referring generally now to FIGS. **4**A-C, the first electrical connector **100** can be configured to be mated to a substrate **700** such as printed circuit board **702**. The printed circuit board **702** can include a body **704** that defines a first end **702***a*, an opposed second end **702***b* that is spaced from the first end **702***a* along the longitudinal direction L, first and second opposed sides **702***c* and **702***d* spaced apart from each other along the lateral direction A, and opposed upper and lower surfaces **702***e* and **702***f* that are spaced apart from each other along the transverse direction T. The first end **702***a* of the printed circuit board can define a leading edge **706** of the printed circuit board configured to be inserted into at least one or both of the recesses **206** and **306** of the first and second connector housings **200** and **300**. At least one or both of the upper and lower surfaces **702***e* and **702***f* can include respective pluralities of at least one or both of electrical power contact pads **708** and electrical signal contact pads **710** affixed to the respective upper and lower surfaces **702***e* and **702***f*. The electrical power contact pads **708** and electrical signal contact pads **710** can be electrically connected to conductive traces that extend through the body **704**, and can be configured to engage with respective ones of the pluralities of electrical power contacts **204** and electrical signal contacts **304** when the first electrical connector **100** is mated to the printed circuit board **702**, thereby placing the first electrical connector **100** into electrical communication with the conductive traces in the body **704**.

In accordance with the illustrated embodiments, the printed circuit board **702** can include a plurality of electrical power contact pads **708** and a plurality of electrical signal contact pads **710** disposed along the leading edge **706** on the upper and lower surfaces **702***c* and **702***d*. In accordance with a first embodiment illustrated in FIG. **4**A, the upper and lower surfaces **702***e* and **702***f* of the printed circuit board **702** include a plurality of electrical power contact pads **708** comprising nine pairs of power contact pads **708** spaced apart from each other along the lateral direction A and a plurality of electrical signal contact pads **710** comprising twelve pairs of signal contact pads **710** spaced apart from each other along the lateral direction A. The body **704** can define a notch **712** that extends into the first end **702***a* along the longitudinal direction L, the notch **712** disposed between the plurality of electrical power contact pads **708** and the plurality of electrical signal contact pads **710**. The first notch can receive an interconnect member **500**.

In accordance with a second embodiment illustrated in FIG. **4**B, the upper and lower surfaces **702***e* and **702***f* of the printed circuit board **702** include a plurality of electrical power contact pads **708** comprising twelve pairs of power contact pads **708** spaced apart from each other along the lateral direction A and a plurality of electrical signal contact pads **710** comprising twelve pairs of signal contact pads **710** spaced apart from each other along the lateral direction A. The body **704** can define a notch **712** that extends into the first end **702***a* along the longitudinal direction L, the notch **712** disposed between the plurality of electrical power contact pads **708** and the plurality of electrical signal contact pads **710**.

Referring now to FIG. **4**C, the body **704** can further define at least one, such as a plurality of latch openings **714**, the latch openings **714** configured to engage with respective ones of the end members **400**, as described in more detail below. In accordance with the illustrated embodiment, the body **704** defines a pair of latch openings **714** defined along the leading edge **706**, including a first latch opening **714***a* disposed between the first side **702***c* and the plurality of power contact pads **708** and a second latch opening **714***b* disposed between the second side **702***d* and the plurality of signal contact pads **710**.

Referring generally now to FIGS. **5**A-D, the first electrical connector **100** can include at least one, such as a plurality of modular members which can be utilized to configure the first electrical connector **100** as an electrical connector, and more particularly as a cable electrical connector. The modular members of the first electrical connector **100** can include at least one, such as a pair of end members **400**, at least one interconnect member **500**, and at least one spacer member **600**. The modular members, including the end member **400**, the interconnect member **500**, and the spacer member **600** can be made of any suitable material as desired, such as an electrically insulative material such as plastic or the like.

Referring now to FIGS. **5**A-B, the end member **400** can be configured to be coupled to the first or second sides **200***c* and **200***d* of the first connector housing **200** so as to close the respective receptacle **206** at the respective first or second sides **200***c* and **200***d* of the first connector housing **200**, and to be coupled to the first or second sides **300***c* and **300***d* of the second connector housing **300** so as to close the respective receptacle **306** at the respective first or second sides **300***c* and **300***d* of the second connector housing **300**. For example, in accordance with the electrical assembly illustrated in FIG. **1**, a first end member **400** can be coupled to the first side **200***c* of the first connector housing **200**, thereby closing the open end of the receptacle **206** at the first side **200***c* of the first connector housing **200**. Similarly, a second end member **400** can be coupled to the second side **300***c* of the second connector housing **300**, thereby closing the open end of the receptacle **306** at the second side **300***d* of the second connector housing **300**. In accordance with the illustrated embodiments, the end member **400** can be coupled to the first or second connector housings **200** or **300** utilizing an ultrasonic welding process, an interference fit, or an integral mold. However the end member **400** can also be coupled to a respective one of the first or second connector housings **200** or **300** using any other suitable method as desired. For example, the end member **400** can include at least one, such as a plurality of coupling members configured to engage with complementary coupling members supported by one or both of the first and second sides **200***c* and **200***d* of the first connector housing **200** and with complementary coupling members supported by one or both of the first and second sides **300***c* and **300***d* of the second connector housing **300**.

The end member **400** can be differently constructed in accordance with particular embodiments of the end member **400**. For instance, accordance with one embodiment, the end member **400** can be constructed as an end member **401**. Each end member **400** includes an end member body **406** that defines a front end **400***a*, an opposed rear end **400***b* that is spaced from the front end **400***a* along the longitudinal direction L, an outer side **400***c*, an opposed inner side **400***d* that is spaced from the outer side **400***c* along the lateral direction A,

an upper end **400***e*, and an opposed lower end **400***f* that is spaced from the upper end **400***e* along the transverse direction T. The outer side **400***c* can define an outer side surface **400***g* and the inner side **400***d* can define an inner side surface **400***h*.

The end member body **406** can define any suitable shape as desired. For example, in accordance with the illustrated embodiment, the end member body **406** can be sized to match the first and second sides **200***c* and **200***d* of the first connector housing **200**. Stated differently, the end member body **406** can have a cross sectional profile in a plane defined along the longitudinal direction L and the transverse direction T that is substantially the same as that of the first or second ends **200***c* or **200***d* of the first connector housing **200**. The end member body **406** can be configured to receive at least a portion of the printed circuit board **702** when the electrical assembly is mated to the printed circuit board **702**. For example, in accordance with the illustrated embodiment, the end member body **406** defines a recess **408** extends that extends into the front end **400***a* along the longitudinal direction L and into the inner side surface **400***h*. The recess **408** can define at least one, such as a plurality of bevelled surfaces **410** proximate the front end **400***a*, the bevelled surfaces **410** configured to guide the printed circuit board **702** into alignment within the respective recesses **206** and **306** of the first and second connector housing **200** and **300** during mating of the first electrical connector **100** to the printed circuit board **702**.

Referring now to FIG. **5**C, the interconnecting member **500** can be configured to be disposed between respective ones of the first or second connector housings **200** or **300** so as to couple the respective ones of the first or second connector housings **200** or **300** to one another. For example, in accordance with the first electrical connector **100** illustrated in FIG. **1**, the interconnect member **500** can be coupled to the second end **200***d* of the first connector housing **200** and to the first end **300***c* of the second connector housing **300**. The illustrated interconnect member **500** includes an interconnect member body **502** that defines a front end **500***a*, an opposed rear end **500***b* that is spaced from the front end **500***a* along the longitudinal direction L, opposed first and second sides **500***c* and **500***d* that are spaced from each other along the lateral direction A, an upper end **500***e*, and an opposed lower end **500***f* that is spaced from the upper end **500***e* along the transverse direction T. The first side **500***c* can define a first side surface **500***g* and the second side **500***d* can define a second side surface **500***h*.

The interconnect member body **502** can define any suitable shape as desired. For example, in accordance with the illustrated embodiment, the interconnect member body **502** can have a cross sectional profile in a plane defined along the longitudinal direction L and the transverse direction T that is substantially the same as that of the first connector housing **200**. The interconnect member **500** can be configured so that a portion of the interconnect member body **502** is received by a complementary portion of the printed circuit board **702** when the first electrical connector **100** is mated to the printed circuit board **702**. For example, in accordance with the illustrated embodiment, the interconnect member body **502** defines a recess **504** that extends into the front end **500***a* along the longitudinal direction L. The recess **504** can define a shorter depth along the longitudinal direction L than a depth along the longitudinal direction L of one or both of the recesses **206** and **306**, such that an intermediate portion **506** of the interconnect member body **502** is received in the notch **712** of the printed circuit board **702**. The intermediate portion **506** can act to ensure proper alignment of the first electrical connector **100** relative to the printed circuit board **702** as the first electrical connector **100** is mated to the printed circuit board **702**. The recess **504** can further define at least one, such as a pair of bevelled surfaces **508** proximate the front end **500***a*, the bevelled surfaces **508** configured to guide the printed circuit board **702** into alignment within the respective recesses **206** and **306** of the first and second connector housing **200** and **300** during mating of the first electrical connector **100** to the printed circuit board **702**.

In accordance with the illustrated embodiment, the interconnect member **500** can be coupled to the first and second connector housings **200** and **300** utilizing an ultrasonic welding process. However the interconnect member **500** can be configured to couple the first and second connector housings **200** and **300** to one another using any other suitable method as desired. For example, the interconnect member **500** can include at least one, such as a plurality of coupling members configured to engage with complementary coupling members supported by respective the first and second sides **200***c* and **200***d* of the first connector housing **200** and the first and second sides **300***c* and **300***d* of the second connector housing **300**.

Referring now to FIG. **5**D, the spacer member **600** can be configured to be disposed between respective ones of the first or second connector housings **200** or **300** and respective ones of the end members **400** so as to couple the respective ones of the first or second connector housings **200** or **300** to the respective ones of the end members **400**. For example, in accordance with the first electrical connector **100** illustrated in FIG. **1**, the spacer member **600** can be coupled to the second end **300***d* of the second connector housing **300** and to the inner side **400***d* of a respective one of the end members **400**. The illustrated spacer member **600** includes a spacer member body **602** that defines a front end **600***a*, an opposed rear end **600***b* that is spaced from the front end **600***a* along the longitudinal direction L, opposed first and second sides **600***c* and **600***d* that are spaced from each other along the lateral direction A, an upper end **600***e*, and an opposed lower end **600***f* that is spaced from the upper end **600***e* along the transverse direction T. The first side **600***c* can define a first side surface **600***g* and the second side **600***d* can define a second side surface **600***h*.

The spacer member body **602** can define any suitable shape as desired. For example, in accordance with the illustrated embodiment, the spacer member body **602** can have a cross sectional profile in a plane defined along the longitudinal direction L and the transverse direction T that is substantially the same as that of the first connector housing **200**. The spacer member **600** can be configured so that a portion of the spacer member body **602** receives at least a portion of the printed circuit board **702** when the first electrical connector **100** is mated to the printed circuit board **702**. For example, in accordance with the illustrated embodiment, the spacer member body **602** defines a recess **604** that extends into the front end **600***a* along the longitudinal direction L. The recess **604** can define a depth along the longitudinal direction L that is substantially equal to the depth along the longitudinal direction L of one or both of the recesses **206** and **306**. The recess **604** can further define at least one, such as a pair of bevelled surfaces **606** proximate the front end **600***a*, the bevelled surfaces **606** configured to guide the printed circuit board **702** into alignment within the respective recesses **206** and **306** of the first and second connector housing **200** and **300** during mating of the first electrical connector **100** to the printed circuit board **702**.

In accordance with the illustrated embodiment, the spacer member **600** can be coupled to the second end **300***d* of the second connector housing **300** and to the inner side **400***d* of a respective one of the end members **400** utilizing an ultrasonic

welding process. However the spacer member **600** can be configured to be coupled to the first and second connector housings **200** or **300** using any other suitable method as desired. For example, the spacer member **600** can include at least one, such as a plurality of coupling members configured to engage with complementary coupling members supported by respective the first and second sides **200***c* and **200***d* of the first connector housing **200** and the first and second sides **300***c* and **300***d* of the second connector housing **300**. In accordance with an alternative embodiment, the spacer member **600** can be configured to define a closure member that closes the corresponding receptacle **306** when the spacer member **600** is affixed to the second connector housing **300**.

Referring now to FIG. **6**, the assembled electrical connector **100** can be mated to a printed circuit board **702**. In accordance with a method of constructing the first electrical connector **100**, a first end member **401***a* can be affixed to the first side **200***c* of the first connector housing **200**, thereby closing the power mating interface **208** at the first side **200***c*. The method can further include affixing an interconnect member **500** to the second side **200***d* of the first connector housing **200** and the first side **300***c* of the second connector housing **300**, thereby coupling the first connector housing **200** to the second connector housing **300**. The method can further include affixing the first side **500***c* of a spacer member **500** to the second end **300***d* of the second connector housing **300** and affixing a second end member **401***b* to the second side **500***d* of the spacer member **500**, thereby closing the signal mating interface **308** proximate the second side **300***d*. In an alternative embodiment omitting the spacer member **600**, a second end member **401***b* can be affixed to the second side **300***d* of the second connector housing **300**, thereby closing the signal mating interface **308** at the second side **300***d*.

In accordance with the illustrated embodiment, the above described steps of affixing components of the first electrical connector **100** to one another can comprise affixing the components to one another using at least one, such as a series of ultrasonic welding processes. For example, all of the components of the first electrical connector **100** can be aligned relative to one another, for example by placing the components into a jig, and can the first electrical connector **100** can be subjected to a single ultrasonic welding process. Alternatively, the components of the first electrical connector **100** can be ultrasonically welded to one another in any order using any number of ultrasonic welding processes as desired. Alternatively still, at least two, such as all of the components of the first electrical connector **100** can include the above described coupling members and constructing the first electrical connector **100** can include one or both of mechanical connecting complementary coupling members of components of the first electrical connector **100** and one or more ultrasonic welding processes.

Referring now to FIGS. **7**A-B, the end member **400** can be configured to releasably latch to the printed circuit board **702** when the first electrical connector **100** is mated to the printed circuit board **702**. For example, the end member **400** can be constructed as an end member **402** that supports at least one latching member **412**. The body of the end member **402** can include an end member body **406** that is constructed substantially the same as the end member body **406** of the end member **401**, with the exception of the addition of at least one latching member **412** supported by the end member body **406**. In accordance with the illustrated embodiment, the at least one latching member **412** comprises a resilient latch arm **414** that includes a rear end **414***b* that extends outward from the outer side surface **400***g* along the lateral direction A, a forward end **414***a* that is spaced from the rear end **414***b* along the longitudinal direction A, and an intermediate portion **414***c* that extends from the rear end **414***b* to the front end **414***a*. The rear end **414***b* can extend outward from the outer side surface **400***g* a distance along the lateral direction A such that the latch arm **414** is spaced from the outer side surface **400***g* sufficiently to allow the forward end **414***a* to be biased inward toward the outer side surface **400***g* during operation of the latching arm **414**, as described in more detail below. In an embodiment, rear end **414***b* may be proximate to rear end **400***b* or located a distance from both the front end **400***a* and rear end **400***b*. The latch arm **414** can include a hook **415** disposed substantially at the front end **414***a*. The hook **415** may further define a leading engagement surface **415***a* and a trailing engagement surface **415***b*, the trailing engagement surface **415***b* extending from a surface of the latch arm **414** opposite the connector housing **100**.

The latch arm **414** can have a length along the longitudinal direction L, as defined by the front and rear ends **414***a* and **414***b*, such that the front end **414***a* is disposed forward of the front ends **200***a* and **300***a* of the first and second connector housings **200** and **300**, and can be received in a respective latch opening **714** of the printed circuit board **702** (see FIG. **4**C) when the first electrical connector **100** is mated to the printed circuit board **702**. For example, in accordance with the illustrated embodiment, the length of the latch arm **414** along the longitudinal direction is longer than corresponding lengths along the longitudinal direction L of the first connector housing **200**, as defined by the front and rear ends **200***a* and **200***b*, and the second connector housing **300**, as defined by the front and rear ends **300***a* and **300***b*.

Referring now to FIGS. **8**A-C, the first electrical connector **100** can be constructed in accordance with an alternative embodiment wherein the first and second end members **401***a* and **401***b* (see FIG. **6**) are replaced with first and second end members **402***a* and **402***b*. The illustrated embodiment of the first electrical connector **100** can be assembled as described elsewhere herein, for instance with reference to the first electrical connector **100** illustrated in FIG. **6**. The electrical assembly illustrated in FIG. **8**A can be mated to the printed circuit board **702** illustrated in FIG. **4**C by inserting the printed circuit board **702** into the recesses **206** and **306** along the mating direction M as described above. As the printed circuit board **702** is inserted, the hooks **415** of the respective latch arms **414** of the first and second end members **402***a* and **402***b* will come into contact with respective ones of the latch openings **714***a* and **714***b*, causing the latch arms **414** to be biased inward along the lateral direction A. As the printed circuit board **702** advances further into the recesses **206** and **306**, the hooks **415** will be disposed fully into respective ones of the latch openings **714***a* and **714***b*. The latch arms **414** will then resiliently snap back into their original non-biased orientations, thereby releasably locking the first electrical connector **100** onto the printed circuit board **702**. It should be appreciated that the first electrical connector **100** is not limited to the illustrated latching members **412**, and that the end member **402** can alternatively be constructed with any other suitable latching members as desired. The disclosure of U.S. Patent Application Publication Nos. 2010/0197166 and 2010/0184339 are both incorporated by reference as if set forth in their entireties herein.

Referring now to FIGS. **9**A-B and **10**A-C, the first electrical connector **100** can be configured to be mated to a second electrical connector **800** mounted to the printed circuit board **702**. The end member **400** can be configured to releasably latch to the second electrical connector **800** when the first electrical connector **100** is mated to the second electrical connector **800**. For example, the end member **400** can be

constructed as an end member **403**. The end member **403** can be constructed substantially the same as the end member **402**, but with a latching arm **414** that has a shorter length along the longitudinal direction L than the length along the longitudinal direction L of the latching arm **414** of the end member **402**. In accordance with the illustrated embodiment, the latch arm **414** of the end member **403** can have a length along the longitudinal direction L, as defined by the front and rear ends **414***a* and **414***b*, such that the front end **414***a* is disposed rearward of the front ends **200***a* and **300***a* of the first and second connector housings **200** and **300**, and can be received in a respective latch opening of the second electrical connector **800** when the first electrical connector **100** is mated to the second electrical connector **800**. For example, the length of the illustrated latch arm **414** along the longitudinal direction L is shorter than the corresponding lengths along the longitudinal direction L of the first connector housing **200**, as defined by the front and rear ends **200***a* and **200***b*, and the second connector housing **300**, as defined by the front and rear ends **300***a* and **300***b*.

The second electrical connector **800** can include at least one or both of pluralities of electrical power contacts and pluralities electrical signal contacts that are configured to mate with the respective pluralities of electrical power contacts **204** and electrical signal contacts **304**. For example, the second electrical connector **800** can include respective pluralities of electrical power contacts and electrical signal contacts that include blade type contact beams configured to be received between the resilient beams of corresponding pairs of electrical power contacts **204** and electrical signal contacts **304**.

It should be appreciated the second electrical connector **800** can be constructed similarly to the first electrical connector **100**. For example, in accordance with the illustrated embodiment, the second electrical connector **800** can include end members **400'** that are configured to engage with the latch arms **414** of the end members **403**. For example, in accordance with the illustrated embodiment, the end members **400'** can define latch openings **402'** that are configured to receive and engage with respective hooks **415** of the latch arms **414** of the end members **403**. The second electrical connector **800** can further include first and second connector housings **200'** and **300'** that support respective pluralities of electrical power contacts and electrical signal contacts and are configured as right angle connector housings. The second electrical connector **800** can further include an interconnect member **500'** and a spacer member **600'**. The second electrical connector **800** can be constructed as described elsewhere herein, for instance with reference to the first electrical connector **100** illustrated in FIG. **6**. It should further be appreciated that the second electrical connector **800** is not limited to the illustrated right angle configuration, and that the second electrical connector **800** can alternatively be constructed as any other type of electrical connector, such as a vertical electrical connector.

Referring now to FIGS. **10**A-C, the first electrical connector **100** can be constructed in accordance with an alternative embodiment wherein the first and second end members **401***a* and **401***b* (see FIG. **6**) are replaced with first and second end members **403***a* and **403***b*. The illustrated embodiment of the first electrical connector **100** can be assembled as described elsewhere herein, for instance with reference to the first electrical connector **100** illustrated in FIG. **6**. The first electrical connector **100** illustrated in FIG. **10**A can be mated to the second electrical connector **800** illustrated in FIGS. **10**A-B by inserting the first electrical connector **100** into the second electrical connector **800** along the mating direction M, such that the complementary pluralities of electrical power contacts and electrical signal contacts of the first and second electrical connectors **100** and **800** engage with one another, thereby placing the first electrical connector **100** into electrical communication with the printed circuit board **702** via the second electrical connector **800**.

As the first electrical connector **100** is mated to the second electrical connector **800**, the hooks **415** of the respective latch arms **414** of the first and second end member **403***a* and **403***b* will come into contact with respective ones of first and second end members **400***a'* and **400***b'*, causing the latch arms **414** to be biased inward along the lateral direction A. As the first electrical connector **100** advances further forward along the mating direction M, the hooks **415** will be disposed into respective ones of the latch openings **402'** of the first and second end members **400***a'* and **400***b'*. The latch arms **414** will then resiliently snap back into their original non-biased orientations, thereby releasably locking the first electrical connector **100** to the second electrical connector **800**.

Referring now to FIGS. **11**A-B and **12**A-C, the end member **400** can include at least one guidance member **416** configured to cooperate with a complementary guidance member **404'** supported by the end member **400'**. For example, the end member **404** can be constructed substantially the same as the end member **403**, with the addition of at least one guidance member **416**. In accordance with the illustrated embodiment, the end member **404** can include a guidance member **416** in the form of a bore **418** that extends into the front end **400***a* along the longitudinal direction. The bore **418** can be at least partially open to the recess **408**. The bore **418** can be sized to receive and engage with a complementary guidance member **404'** supported by the end member **400'**. For example, the end member **400'** can include a complementary guidance member **404'** in the form of a post **406'** that extends outward from a front end of the end member **400'**, the post **406'** configured to be received in the bore **418** when the first electrical connector **100** is mated to the second electrical connector **800**. The bore **418** and the post **406'** can cooperate to ensure proper alignment of the respective pluralities of electrical power contacts and electrical signal contacts of the first and second connector housings **200** and **300** of the first electrical connector **100** and the first and second connector housings **200'** and **300'** of the second electrical connector **800** during mating of the first electrical connector **100** to the first electrical connector **100**.

It should be appreciated that the end member **404** and the end member **400'** are not limited to the illustrated guidance members, and that the end member **404**, and that end member **400'** can be alternatively configured using any other suitable guidance members as desired. For example, referring now to FIG. **13**, each of the first and second end members **404***a* and **404***b* can include a guidance member **416** in the form of a post **420** that extends outward from the front end **400***a* of the end member **404**, the post **420** configured to be received by a complementary guidance member **404'** supported by the end member **400'**. For example, each of the first and second end members **400***a'* and **400***b'* can include a complementary guidance member **404'** in the form of a bore **408'** that extends into the front end of the end member **400'** along the longitudinal direction L. The post **420** and the bore **408'** can be configured to cooperate substantially the same as the post **406'** and the bore **418** when the first electrical connector **100** is mated to the second electrical connector **800**. As shown in FIG. **13**, the second connector housing **300** can include a plurality of holes that are defined by the second connector housing **300** and are positioned over the electrical signal contacts **304**. One first plurality of holes, positioned over mating ends of the electrical signal contacts, can be heat holes. A second plurality of

holes, positioned over between the first plurality of holes and a cable insertion end of the second connector housing, can be electrical signal contact **304** retention holes.

Referring now to FIGS. **12**A-C, the first electrical connector **100** can be constructed in accordance with an another alternative embodiment wherein the first and second end members **401***a* and **401***b* (see FIG. **6**) are replaced with first and second end members **404***a* and **404***b*. The illustrated embodiment of the first electrical connector **100** can be assembled as described elsewhere herein, for instance with reference to the first electrical connector **100** illustrated in FIG. **6**. The first electrical connector **100** illustrated in FIG. **10**A can be mated to the second electrical connector **800** illustrated in FIGS. **12**A-B by inserting the first electrical connector **100** into the second electrical connector **800** along the mating direction M, such that the complementary pluralities of electrical power contacts and electrical signal contacts of the first and second electrical connectors **800** engage with one another, thereby placing the first electrical connector **100** into electrical communication with the printed circuit board **702** via the second electrical connector **800**.

As the first electrical connector **100** is mated to the second electrical connector **800**, the posts **406'** of the first and second end members **400***a*' and **400***b*' will be received in respective the bores **418** of the first and second end members **404***a* and **404***b*, thereby causing the complementary pluralities of electrical power contacts and electrical signal contacts of the first and second electrical connectors **800** to align with one another. As the first electrical connector **100** is inserted further into the second electrical connector **800**, the hooks **415** of the respective latch arms **414** of the first and second end member **404***a* and **404***b* will come into contact with respective ones of first and second end members **400***a*' and **400***b*', causing the latch arms **414** to be biased inward along the lateral direction A. As the first electrical connector **100** advances further forward along the mating direction M, the hooks **415** will be disposed into respective ones of the latch openings **402'** of the first and second end members **400***a*' and **400***b*'. The latch arms **414** will then resiliently snap back into their original non-biased orientations, thereby releasably locking the first electrical connector **100** to the second electrical connector **800**.

Referring now to FIGS. **14**A-D, the first electrical connector **100** can be constructed with first connector housings **200** supporting a plurality of second power contact inserts **212***b* comprising twelve second power contact insert **212***b*, such that the first electrical connector **100** will include a plurality of power cables **250** comprising twelve power cables **250**. Of course the printed circuit board **702** can be constructed with a corresponding number of electrical power contact pads **708** and electrical signal contact pads **710**, as illustrated in FIG. **4**B.

It should be appreciated that the first electrical connector **100** is not limited to the embodiments illustrated herein, and that the first electrical connector **100** can be constructed utilizing a different arrangement of the components of the illustrated embodiment, or different components, in any combination as desired. For example, the first electrical connector **100** can be alternatively constructed in accordance with any of the following embodiments. The first electrical connector **100** can be constructed utilizing one or both of two or more first connector housings **200** and two or more second connector housings **300**. For instance, the electrical assembly can be constructed such that the position of the first connector housing **200** and the second connector housing **300** along the lateral direction A are reversed. In accordance with another alternative embodiment, the first electrical connector **100** can be constructed having a second connector housing **300** and a pair of first connector housings **200**, each first connector housing **200** disposed adjacent to a respective one of the first and second sides **300***c* and **300***d* of the second connector housing **300**. Alternatively, the electrical assembly can be constructed using only a first connector housing **200**, or only a second connector housing **300**. It should further still be appreciated that the second electrical connector **800** can be alternatively constructed to mate with any of the above-described embodiments of the first electrical connector **100**.

The components of at least one or both of the first electrical connector **100** and the second electrical connector **800** can be provided as a kit. The kit can include any combination of the components of one or both of the first electrical connector **100** or the second electrical connector **800** as desired. For instance, the kit can include any combination of first connector housings **200**, first connector housing **300**, first connector housings **200'**, and first connector housings **300'**. The kit can further include any number of the first and second power contact inserts **212***a* and **212***b* and signal contact inserts **312**, in any combination. The first and second connector housings **200**, **300**, **200'**, **300'** can be configured the same or differently. The kit can further include any number of end member **400**, such as the end members **401**, **402**, **403**, or **404**, and the end members **400'** in any combination, as desired. The kit can further include any number of one or all of the interconnect members **500** and **500'** and the spacer members **600** and **600'**, in any combination.

In accordance with an embodiment, a method of assembling one or both of the first and second electrical connectors **800** can comprise the steps of providing or teaching the use of at least one of a first connector housing **200** and a second connector housing **300**, first and second end members **400** or **400'**, such as first and second end members **401***a* and **401***b*, first and second end member **402***a* and **402***b*, first and second end member **403***a* and **403***b*, first and second end member **404***a* and **404***b*, or first and second end member **400***a*' and **400***b*'. The method can further include teaching the step of mounting the first end member **400** to a respective side of one of the first and second connector housings **200** and **300**, such as the first and second sides **200***c* and **200***d* of the first connector housing **200** or the first and second sides **300***c* and **300***d* of the second connector housing **300**. The method can further include teaching the step of mounting the second end member **400** to a respective side of one of the first and second connector housings **200** and **300**, such as the first and second sides **200***c* and **200***d* of the first connector housing **200** or the first and second sides **300***c* and **300***d* of the second connector housing **300**.

Although the electrical assembly has been described herein with reference to preferred embodiments and/or preferred methods, it should be understood that the words which have been used herein are words of description and illustration, rather than words of limitation, and that the scope of the instant disclosure is not intended to be limited to those particulars, but rather is meant to extend to all structures, methods, and/or uses of the herein described electrical assembly. Those skilled in the relevant art, having the benefit of the teachings of this specification, may effect numerous modifications to the electrical assembly as described herein, and changes may be made without departing from the scope and spirit of the instant disclosure, for instance as recited in the appended claims.

What is claimed:

1. An electrical connector comprising:

a first connector housing and a plurality of electrical power contacts supported by the first connector housing, the

first connector housing having a first housing body that defines a front end, a rear end spaced from the front end along a mating direction, and opposed first and second sides that extend between the front and rear ends and spaced apart from each other along a second direction that extends substantially perpendicular to the mating direction, the first housing body further defining a receptacle at the front end that is elongate along the second direction so as to define a power mating interface, wherein the receptacle extends through the first and second sides; and

a second connector housing and a plurality of electrical signal contacts supported by the second connector housing, the second connector housing having a second housing body that defines a front end, a rear end spaced from the front end along the mating direction, and opposed first and second sides extending between the front and rear ends of the second connector housing and spaced apart from each other along the second direction, the first side of the second connector disposed adjacent the second side of the first connector housing, the second housing body further defining a receptacle at the front end that extends along the second direction so as to define a signal mating interface, wherein the receptacle of the second connector housing extends through the first and second sides of the second connector housing;

a first end member that is separate from the first connector housing and is configured to be coupled to the first side of the first connector housing so as to close one end of the receptacle of the first connector housing; and

a second end member that is separate from the second connector housing and is configured to be coupled to the second side of the second connector housing so as to close one end of the receptacle of the second connector housing.

2. The electrical connector of claim **1**, further comprising an interconnecting member configured to be disposed between the first and second connector housings, such that the interconnecting member is coupled to the second side of the first connector housing and further coupled to the first side of the second connector housing.

3. The electrical connector of claim **1**, further comprising a spacer member configured to be disposed between one of the first and second connector housings and the respective one of the first and second end members, such that the one of the first and second end members is affixed to the spacer member.

4. The electrical connector of claim **3**, wherein the spacer member is affixed to the second end of the second connector housing, and the second end member is affixed to the spacer member.

5. The electrical connector of claim **1**, wherein the at least one of the first and second end members comprises a latch member that is configured to secure the one of the first and second end members to a complementary electrical device that is mated to the electrical connector.

6. The electrical connector of claim **5**, wherein the at least one of the first and second end members further comprises a guidance member that is configured to guide the complementary electrical device to mate with the electrical connector.

7. The electrical connector of claim **6**, wherein the guidance member is disposed adjacent the latch member.

8. The electrical connector of claim **6**, wherein the guidance member comprises a bore that extends into the at least one of the first and second end members along the mating direction.

9. The electrical connector of claim **6**, wherein the guidance member comprises a post that extends forward from the at least one of the first and second end members along the mating direction.

10. A method comprising:

coupling a first end member to a first side of a first connector housing wherein the first end member is separate from the first connector housing before coupling the first end member to the first side, the first connector housing supporting a plurality of electrical power contacts and defining a receptacle that is elongate along a mating end of the first connector housing from the first side to an opposed second side that is spaced from the first side, wherein the receptacle defines a mating interface and extends through the first and second sides; and

coupling a second end member to a second side of a second connector housing wherein the second end member is separate from the second connector housing before coupling the second end member to the second side, the second connector housing supporting a plurality of electrical signal contacts and defining a receptacle that is elongate along a mating end of the second connector housing from the first side of the second connector housing to an opposed second side of the second connector housing that is spaced from the first side of the second connector housing, wherein the receptacle defines a mating interface and extends through the first and second sides; and

closing the receptacle at the first side of the first connector housing by coupling the first end member to the first side of the first connector housing.

11. The method of claim **10**, further comprising the step of closing the receptacle at the second side of the second connector housing by coupling the second end member to the second side of the second connector housing.

12. The method of claim **10**, further comprising the step of coupling an interconnect member to the second side of the first connector housing and the first end of the second connector housing so as to couple the first and second connector housings to each another.

13. The method of claim **12**, further comprising affixing a spacer member between the second connector housing and the second end member.

14. The method of claim **12**, further comprising the step of mounting the first and second connector housings onto a substrate.

15. The method of claim **14**, further comprising the step of inserting the interconnect member into a complementary recess in the substrate during the mounting step.

16. A kit comprising:

at least one first connector housing supporting a plurality of electrical power contacts, the first connector housing having a first housing body that defines a front end, a rear end spaced from the front end along an mating direction, and opposed first and second sides that extend between the front and rear ends and are spaced apart from each other along a second direction that extends substantially perpendicular to the mating direction, the first housing body further defining a receptacle at the front end that is elongate along the second direction so as to define a power mating interface, wherein the receptacle extends through the first and second sides;

at least one second connector housing supporting a plurality of electrical signal contacts, the second connector housing having a second housing body that defines a front end, a rear end spaced from the front end along the mating direction, and opposed first and second sides that

extend between the front and rear ends of the second connector housing and are spaced apart from each other along the second direction, the second housing body further defining a receptacle at the front end that extends along the second direction so as to define a signal mating interface, wherein the receptacle extends through the first and second sides of the second connector housing; and

a plurality of closure members configured to be coupled to at least one of the first and second sides of at least one of the first and second connector housings so as to close at least one end of the corresponding receptacle, wherein the plurality of closure members are separate from the at least one first and second connector housings before being coupled to the at least one first and second connector housings.

17. The kit of claim **16**, wherein at least one of the closure members comprises an interconnect member configured to be coupled between the first and second connector housings.

18. The kit of claim **17**, wherein the second end of the first connector housing is disposed adjacent to the first end of the second connector housing, the first end of the first connector housing is a free end, and the second end of the second connector housing is a free end, and at least one of the closure members comprises an end member configured to be affixed to at least one of the free ends of the first and second connector so as to close a corresponding at least one end of the respective receptacle.

19. The kit of claim **18**, further comprising a plurality of spacer member configured to be affixed between respective sides of the at least one of the first and second connector housings and the end member.

20. The kit of claim **18**, wherein at the end member comprises a latch member configured to secure the at least one of the plurality of end members to a complementary electrical device that is mated to the first and second connector housings.

21. The kit of claim **18**, wherein the end member further comprises a guidance member that is configured to guide the complementary electrical device to mate with the first and second connector housings.

22. A method of assembling an electrical assembly, the method comprising the steps of:

providing or teaching the use of a first connector housing supporting a plurality of electrical power contacts and defining a first receptacle that extends along a front end of the first connector housing and through opposed first and second sides of the first connector housing, a second connector housing supporting a plurality of electrical signal contacts and defining a second receptacle that extends along a front end of the second connector housing and through opposed first and second sides of the second connector housing, and first and second end members configured to close respective ones of the first and second receptacles;

teaching the step of mounting the first end member to the first side of the first connector housing; and

teaching the step of mounting the second end member to the second side of the second connector housing, wherein the first and second end members are separate from the first and second connector housings before being mounted onto the first and second sides.

23. The method of claim **22**, further comprising the steps of:

providing or teaching the use of at least one interconnect member configured to be affixed to the second side of the first connector housing and the first side of the second connector housing; and

teaching the step of mounting the interconnect member to the second side of the first connector housing and the first side of the second connector housing so as to couple the first connector housing to the second connector housing.

24. The electrical connector of claim **1**, wherein each of the first and second end members defines opposed inner and outer sides that are separate from the first and second sides of each of the first and second connector housings.

25. The electrical connector of claim **1**, wherein the first and second end members are configured to be releasably attached to the first side of the first connector housing and second side of the second connector housing, respectively.

26. The method of claim **10**, wherein each of the first and second end members defines opposed inner and outer sides that are separate from the first and second sides of each of the first and second connector housings.

27. The method of claim **10**, wherein:

coupling the first end member comprises releasably attaching the first end member to the first side of the first connector housing; and

coupling the second end member comprises releasably attaching the second end member to the second side of the second connector housing.

28. The kit of claim **16**, wherein each of the closure members defines opposed inner and outer sides that are separate from the first and second sides of each of the first and second connector housings.

29. The kit of claim **16**, wherein each of the closure members is configured to be releasably attached to at least one of the first side of the first connector housing and second side of the second connector housing.

30. The method of claim **22**, wherein each of the first and second end members defines opposed inner and outer sides that are separate from the first and second sides of each of the first and second connector housings.

31. The method of claim **22**, wherein:

teaching the step of mounting the first end member includes teaching the step of releasably attaching the first end member to the first side of the first connector housing; and

teaching the step of mounting the second end member includes teaching the step of releasably attaching the second end member to the second side of the second connector housing.

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